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FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

IN THE LUMBER TRADE OR A WINNING SPECULATOR

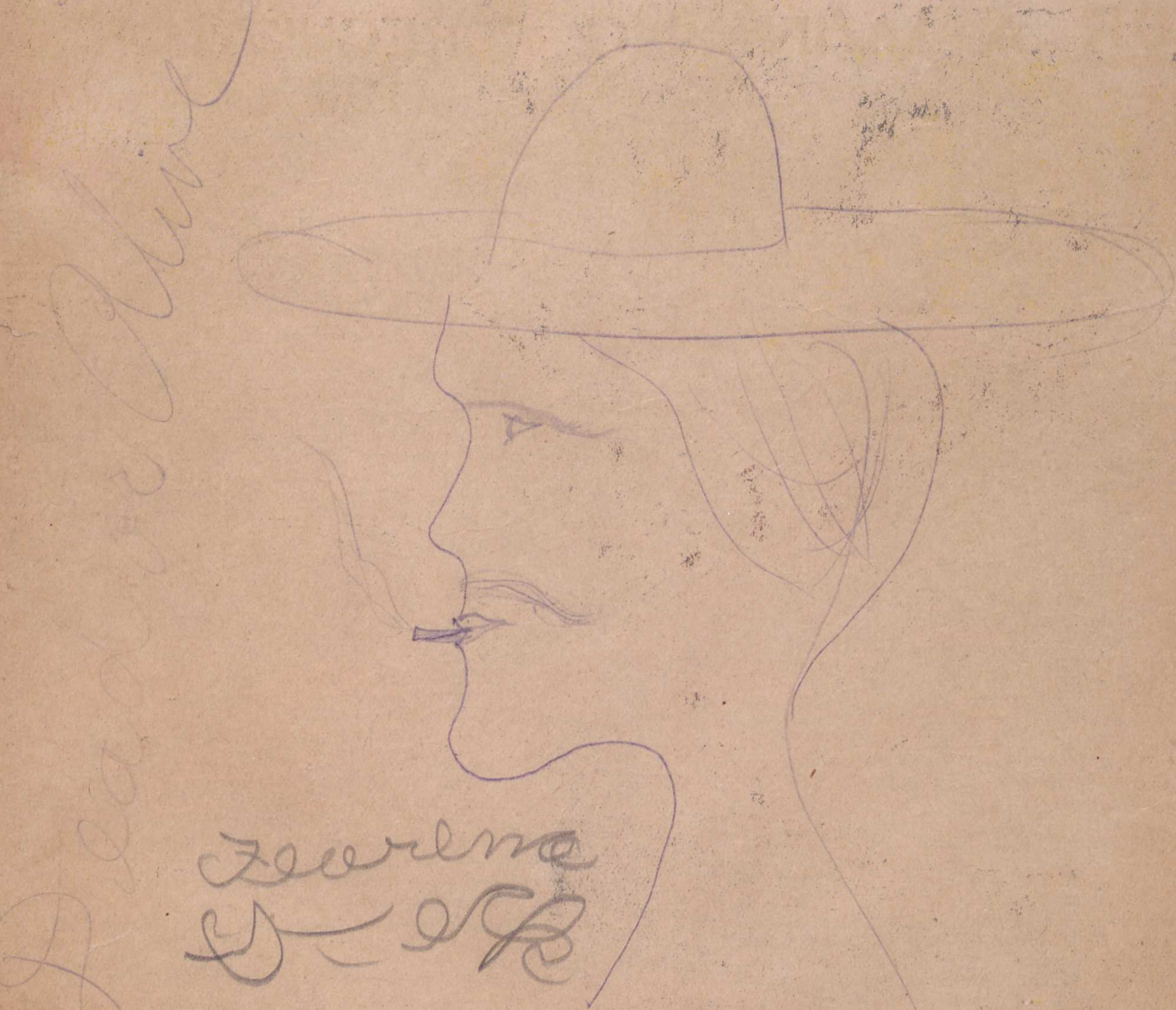
AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



"Now, boys, all together!" sang out the foreman, as he steadied the log with his gripper. "One more shove and it will hit the rock." The men shoved, the huge log swung into place and the boy was saved.

When I'm gone you'll soon forget
When from
You be happy
That you
In your heart
Not one pain
I will leave you in life's morning
When I'm gone



Frederica
D. B.

Jesse James.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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IN THE LUMBER TRADE

OR

A WINNING SPECULATOR

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

THE ACCUSATION.

"Joseph Jackson!" called Mr. Simcox, the principal of the Rockdale Institute, in a stern tone.

"Yes, sir," answered a sturdy, bright-faced boy, rising in the center of the class-room occupied by perhaps fifty scholars of about his own age.

"Come forward, sir!" said Mr. Simcox, severely.

The lad obeyed the mandate.

"You are accused of paying my study a surreptitious visit during the night and desecrating the busts of Shakespeare, Milton and Byron with an application of red and black paint."

A laugh, quickly suppressed, from the lower corner of the room, followed by a general snicker from the pupils, brought a flush of anger to the principal's sallow countenance.

"Silence!" he roared, glaring about the room.

The silence of the tomb settled upon the assemblage.

Turning again to the lad who was the center of attraction, Mr. Simcox said:

"Are you guilt—"

"Ouch!" came from the corner of the room.

Mr. Simcox darted a look in that direction.

"Did you make that noise, Tom Beaseley?" he demanded.

"No, sir," replied that youth, promptly.

"Who did, then?"

Silence.

"Beaseley!" roared the principal.

"Sir!"

"Stand up."

Beaseley stood up.

"Answer me, sir! Who made that sound?"

"Don't know, sir," replied the boy, with a very red face.

"I believe it was you."

"Didn't do nothing, sir," protested Beaseley.

"Didn't do nothing! What do you mean by using such an ungrammatical expression? What were you sent to this school for but to learn to speak correctly. If you did not make the sound you know who did it. Tell me this instant or I shall punish you severely."

"I couldn't tell you just who said it, sir."

"Go to your room, sir, and learn fifty lines from the tenth chapter of the History of the United States."

"Where shall I commence, sir?"

"From the beginning of the chapter."

Tom Beaseley left his desk and walked out of the room.

It was he who had said "Ouch!"

It had been wrung from him by the sharp point of a pin inserted in the end of a stick which had been jabbed into his leg by a big, loutish-looking boy named Phil Potts, who sat across from him in the last row of desks.

Potts was the most unpopular boy in the school with everybody but Mr. Simcox.

He toadies to the principal, ran errands for him, carried information reflecting on his schoolmates to him, and was guilty of other mean tricks, which Mr. Simcox construed as loyalty to his interests, and therefore rewarded Potts in various ways, and never took any notice of his shortcomings.

Tom Beaseley might have confessed that he uttered the "Ouch!" and explained why he could not help doing so, but he was not a tale-bearer, and he didn't believe it would do much good, anyway.

As he left the room he registered an intention of getting square with Potts.

"Now, sir," said the principal, returning to Joe Jackson, "are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty, sir," replied Joe, in a round full, square tone that carried no indication of guilt with it.

"Philip Potts!" said Mr. Simcox.

The sneak and toady shuffled his feet uneasily and slowly arose, looking decidedly uncomfortable.

"Did you see Jackson coming stealthily from my study at half-past eleven last night?"

"Yes, sir," replied Potts, in a low tone.

"You're a liar, Phil Potts!" shot from Joe's angry and indignant lips.

"Silence!" roared the principal. "How dare you interrupt the witness?"

"Because he uttered a rank falsehood," retorted Joe.

"Silence!" shouted Mr. Simcox.

"But I have the right to defend myself," protested Joe.

"Silence!" howled the principal, seizing a book and banging the desk with it.

Joe subsided.

"Now, Philip, you are sure the boy you saw coming from my room was Jackson?" said the principal. "Speak up. Don't be afraid."

Potts shuffled his feet and reluctantly opened his mouth to reply.

At that moment a missile, in the shape of a dried pea, shot through the partly open window.

It was propelled by a long, thin, tin tube, known by the name of a pea-shooter, and the motive power was provided by a deep breath emitted from the strong lungs of Tom Beaseley on the outside.

The pea landed squarely in Phil's mouth, and he uttered a

howl and began sputtering and gasping in a way that aroused a laugh from the scholars near him.

This unexpected exhibition astonished Mr. Simcox.

"What is the matter, Philip?" he asked in a mild tone.

At that point Phil succeeded in ejecting the pea.

It flew with some velocity into the eye of the lad in front of him who had turned around to look at him.

"Here! What are you doing?" he demanded, rubbing his optic.

The boy at the next desk haw-hawed, for he thought it awfully funny.

"Moses Beach, leave the room, sir!" cried Mr. Simcox.

Beach was the boy who had laughed.

Moses got up and disappeared.

"Wow!" howled Phil, at that juncture, for a second hard pea had struck him in the eye.

A snicker ran through the room.

"In the name of common sense, what is the matter with you, Philip?" demanded the principal.

"Somebody fired a pea in my mouth and another in my eye," said Potts.

A third pea whacked him on the nose, and he sprang away from his desk.

As he did so he caught a fleeting glimpse of the grinning face of Tom Beaseley outside the window.

"Tom Beaseley did it with his pea-shooter," said Phil. "He's outside the window."

Mr. Simcox, taking the cue, rushed to the window nearest him, threw it up and caught Beaseley in the act of discharging his fourth shot.

"Beaseley!" he roared, "go to my study and wait there till I come."

With visions of a caning in prospect, Tom sneaked away in discomfiture.

Order having been re-established, Phil Potts was directed to continue.

He stated that the boy he had seen leaving the principal's study at so late an hour the night before was, in his opinion, Joe Jackson, though he admitted that he had not got a square look at him.

"How is it you were out of bed and sneaking around the hall at that hour?" asked Joe.

"Silence!" cried Mr. Simcox, who did not wish his witness cross-examined.

"Will you ask him yourself, sir?" said Joe.

The principal glared at Joe.

"I have no doubt he had a good reason for being in the corridor at the time," he said.

"But it's against your rules."

"You didn't pay much attention to my rules when you went to my study and committed that outrageous piece of business."

"I did not visit your study last night, nor at any other time except when you were there."

"Philip Potts saw you."

"He did not see me. If he says he did he lies. My word is as good as his any day."

And it was a great deal better in his own estimation, and in the estimation of the bulk of the scholars.

"That will do, Jackson. Sit down, Philip. Henry Marsh, stand up."

Marsh was Potts' particular crony, the only one he could count on as a friend.

Whatever Potts asserted, Marsh was willing to swear to if called upon to do so.

He was an insignificant looking lad, with shifty eyes and a squeaky voice.

"Now, Marsh, were you with Potts last night in the corridor leading to my study about half-past eleven?"

"Yes, sir," squeaked Marsh.

"Explain why you and Potts were downstairs at that hour when you should have been in your room."

"We heard a suspicious noise down in the corridor. It woke us up. Phil said he guessed burglars had got in, and he said it was our duty to go and see what caused the sounds, and if it was burglars we would go to your room and wake you up. When we got down to the bottom of the steps in the dark we saw a light shining under the study door. I said I guessed there was nothing wrong—that you were in there reading or writing. Phil said we ought to make sure about it, and he told me to look through the keyhole. I did, and I saw Jackson standing at the table painting a couple of red moons on the face of one of your busts, and—"

"That's a lie!" cried Joe.

"Silence!" ejaculated the principal.

"He put a dab of red on the nose and made black lines on the throat and across the forehead," went on Marsh, glibly,

"You are certain that the person who was doing the painting was Joseph Jackson?" said Mr. Simcox.

"Yes, sir. Anyway, I saw him coming out of the study afterward. That's the time Phil saw him."

"How could you see me or anybody else in the dark?" demanded Joe.

"You had a candle in your hand."

"Oh, I did?" said Joe. "I've always known you to be a little sneak, but I didn't think you were such a barefaced liar."

"I can prove it was you," retorted Marsh, defiantly.

"Prove it, then."

"You took the meerschaum pipe belonging to Mr. Simcox away with you and carried it up to the room where you sleep with your bunch. I looked through the keyhole and saw you hide it behind your trunk. I'll bet it's there now."

"Ha!" exclaimed Mr. Simcox. Then, turning to his assistant teacher, he said: "Mr. Jinx, go up to No. 11, look behind Jackson's trunk, and see if my pipe is there. I did not observe that it had disappeared from my study."

Mr. Jinx, a hatchet-faced young man, a graduate of some college, who occupied the post of assistant instructor, left the room, and his return was awaited with much interest by all in the room, particularly Joe, who was certain that if the pipe was found behind his trunk that it had been planted there by either Marsh or Potts, both of whom he knew hated him most cordially.

He realized that the accusation was a plot got up by his two enemies to bring about his disgrace and have him severely punished.

When he looked at Marsh he noticed a triumphant grin on his mean little face.

The grin was also reflected on Potts' countenance.

He was therefore prepared for the production of the pipe by Mr. Jinx.

The assistant instructor was absent about five minutes.

"Well, Mr. Jinx, did you find the pipe?" asked Mr. Simcox.

"No, sir. There was no pipe behind Jackson's trunk," replied Mr. Jinx.

The grin disappeared from the faces of Marsh and Potts, and they looked at each other in great discomfiture.

CHAPTER II.

SENTENCED TO THE DARK CELL.

Joe was perhaps as surprised as his two enemies.

Mr. Jinx did not add the piece of information that he had found Tom Beaseley in the room when he should have been in the principal's study.

Beaseley was one of the six—bunch, as Marsh called them—who slept in the room, consequently his presence there could not be regarded as suspicious.

He had no business to be there when he had been ordered to the study, and Mr. Jinx considered that he fulfilled his duty by telling him he had better go there or his punishment was likely to be severer.

Beaseley went, and the assistant instructor returned to the class-room.

"So you didn't find the meerschaum pipe in the—that is, behind Jackson's trunk?" said Mr. Simcox.

"No, sir," replied Mr. Jinx.

"Did you look well?"

"I did."

"Did you look anywhere else in the room for it?"

"I gave a glance around, but I was specifically requested to look behind the trunk."

"What have you to say about that, Marsh?" asked the principal.

"Nothing, sir. He must have taken it from behind the trunk and put it in his trunk when he got up this morning," replied Marsh.

"You're at liberty to examine my trunk, Mr. Simcox," said Joe. "I'll hand you the key."

Joe's readiness to have his trunk examined was not taken advantage of by the principal.

He judged that his pipe was not in the trunk, or Joe, if guilty of taking it, wouldn't have made the offer.

He set considerable store by his pipe, and didn't want to lose it, but its temporary absence from his study was a side issue when compared with the havoc worked on his three valuable busts.

The testimony adduced convinced him of Joe's guilt, and in addition to sending a bill for damages to Joe's uncle, who was a banker in the town of Clearhaven, he intended to administer condign punishment to the offender.

Mr. Simcox entertained no particular ill-will against Joe,

but the boy had come to the school handicapped by the reputation for mischief.

He had been politely put out of two schools for raising high jinks generally, and Mr. Simcox had accepted him only on his promise to behave himself.

Joe had kept his word to behave, though it was a difficult matter for him to keep straight, and Mr. Simcox was beginning to have hopes for him, and to plume himself on his ability to successfully handle a pupil who had proved too much for the heads of other schools, when to his anger and dismay the outrage on his precious busts was pulled off the night before.

Give a dog a bad name and it will stick to him, is an old saying.

Joe's reputation in the past at once caused him to be suspected, and suspicion soon became a certainty when Phil Potts called on Mr. Simcox and told him what he alleged he knew about the affair.

"We won't discuss the pipe now," said the principal. "You will go to my study and wait there till I come."

"Do you believe the statements of Potts and Marsh that I was in your study last night at a late hour, sir?" demanded Joe.

"I am obliged to accept their stories, for one corroborates the other."

"Then you must believe I am a downright liar, since I have positively denied having been anywhere near your study at the time mentioned. Furthermore, I deny all knowledge of the trick pulled off by somebody on your busts. I had no hand in the matter whatever," said Joe, earnestly.

"The case is closed. Go directly to my study and await my coming."

"I object to being unfairly dealt with. You have condemned me on the statement of two boys who are enemies of mine, and who have deliberately lied to get me into trouble. I won't stand for any such deal as that."

"Good boy!" came from one of the scholars, but which one it was impossible to tell.

"Go to my study this instant, sir, do you hear?" roared the principal.

Joe saw it was useless to argue the case further.

He was up against it, and all on account of Potts and Marsh. "I'll make them regret what they've done," he muttered, and he left the class-room. "I'll give each of them the biggest whaling he ever had in his life. I'll compel them to own up that they lied about me, and my room-mates will help me do it if necessary. Those two scalawags are a disgrace to any school. I can't see how Simcox stands for them. I suppose it is because they act as spies for him. A real decent principal wouldn't tolerate spies. Well, if Simcox thinks I intend to meekly submit to be punished for an act I didn't do, he'll find out his mistake."

When Joe entered the principal's study he found his roommate, Tom Beaseley, there looking out of the window which overlooked the garden.

On the table on one side of the room stood the three disfigured busts.

They were certainly decorated to the queen's taste.

Shakespeare bore a scarlet red nose, a red moon on each cheek, vertical black stripes on his throat, and horizontal ones across his forehead.

Milton had a full black beard as far as paint would make it, and three red crescents on his forehead.

Byron's countenance was ornamented with all manner of strange red and black birds and beasts, crudely executed.

Angry and disgusted as Joe felt at that moment, he couldn't help grinning when he looked at the decorated busts.

Tom turned around when he heard the door open.

He thought the comer was the principal.

"Hello, Joe. Have you been sent here, too?" he said.

"Yes. I've been found guilty on the perjured testimony of Potts and Marsh."

"Of daubing up those busts?"

"Yes."

"And you're innocent?"

"As a lamb."

"Who do you suppose performed the job?"

"I haven't the least idea."

"You can take it from me that it was either Potts or Marsh, or both of them together. Then they laid the blame of it on you."

"I'll lay something on them at the first chance I get."

"I would. I'd knock the daylights out of them. I saved you from one thing, at any rate."

"What was that?"

"Taking old Simcox's meerschaum. I was standing outside the class-room door listening to what was going on inside, curious to learn how the case against you was progressing, and I heard Marsh tell Simcox that you had taken his pipe to our room and hidden it behind your trunk. I made a bee-line upstairs for the room and looked behind the trunk, for I was sure that either Marsh or Potts had put it there to get you in bad with the principal. It was there all right, and I removed it. I was about to take it to the study here when Jinx suddenly came in and caught me in the room. He told me that as Simcox had ordered me to go to his study I had better do so without delay. So I came right away. There's the meerschaum on Simcox's desk."

"Thanks, old chap," said Joe. "You've shown Marsh up as a liar on one count, but Simcox didn't call him down for it. Those sneaks have a pull with him, and their word goes further with him than any one else's. Some day, however, they'll get all that's coming to them, and it will be a heavy dose, believe me."

"So Simcox has pronounced you guilty of monkeying with the busts?"

"Yes."

"And sent you here to receive your sentence?"

"There's little doubt about that."

"And I'm in for a heavy lay-out, too. Simcox caught me operating the pea-shooter on Potts. I expect it will be the Black Hole for mine for at least forty-eight hours. I wouldn't be surprised but you will inhabit the other cell for a week."

"I'll run away first. If I were guilty I wouldn't object to whatever punishment Simcox chose to inflict on me; but to be punished for what I didn't do, I won't stand for."

"I don't see how you can help yourself unless you skip before Simcox appears and tells you your doom."

"No, I won't make any move until I make a final protest."

"It will be too late then."

"How will it?"

"As soon as Simcox announces your punishment he'll see to it that you perform your penance."

Before Joe could make a reply the principal walked in.

He stalked majestically to his desk and, sitting down, swung around and looked at the boys.

"Thomas Beaseley, I sent you from the class-room with directions to repair to your room and learn the first fifty lines from Chapter X. of the History of the United States. Instead of obeying you went into the yard with an implement called a pea-shooter and began shooting peas at Philip Potts in the class-room as he was in the act of telling me his story about the vandalism which had been committed in my study last night. Your punishment will be three days in the dark cell on bread and water," said Mr. Simcox, tapping the hand-bell on his desk.

The gardener of the establishment, who had evidently been waiting outside the door for the signal, walked in.

"Take Beaseley to one of the dark cells and lock him up. He is to remain there for three days," said the principal.

Tom was immediately marched away, and Joe was left alone with the head of the institute.

"Now, sir, gaze upon your handiwork," said Mr. Simcox, pointing at the defaced busts. "You ought to blush with shame at being the author of such an outrageous piece of business. Those busts are ruined beyond redemption as works of art. Am I to suffer the pecuniary loss of replacing them? It would be manifestly unfair. So I shall write your uncle an account of your deed, and request him to make the loss good. As this is your first practical joke in my establishment, I will not go to the extreme of sending you away in disgrace, as you justly deserve, for your uncle told me this was the last chance he was going to give you to acquire an education at school. You have already disgraced yourself at several institutions of learning, and I am going to see if I can't reclaim you by a little judicious punishment that shall fit the crime. I am satisfied that you are really not a bad boy, but a spoiled one. I regret that after promising me you would amend your ways that you have broken your word. That is the worst feature of this unhappy affair."

"I haven't broken my word, sir," said Joe, stoutly. "I have never broken my word yet. I did not deface your busts. I was not in this room last night. The statements made by Phil Potts and Hen Marsh were not true in the faintest particular. They are both down on me, and this is a put-up job to get me expelled from the school."

"I am compelled to believe them when both of them tell the same story. I see no reason why they should be down on you, as you term it. They are very good boys."

"They're a pair of sneaks, and the whole school knows it."

They carry tales to you, and that is why you defend them," said Joe, boldly.

"That will do, sir. I won't listen to another word. Your punishment will be a week in the second dark cell on a partial bread and water diet. If after you have been incarcerated three days you are truly penitent, and send me word that you are ready to promise to amend your ways, I will consider the question of releasing you and permitting you to return to your studies. That is all."

Mr. Simcox tapped his bell as before, and the gardener, who had returned after disposing of Beaseley, answered the call.

"Put this young man in the dark cell next to the one in which you have placed Beaseley. He will remain there seven days unless I remit a portion of the sentence," said the principal.

Then Joe was led away to the cellar of the building and locked into the cell in question, where he was left to ruminate upon his situation.

CHAPTER III.

A BREAK FOR FREEDOM.

As the footsteps of the gardener died away and silence fell upon the cellar, Joe heard three knocks upon the stout wooden partition which divided his cell from the adjoining one.

Of course, the knocks were made by Tom Beaseley, and Joe answered them by three knocks on his side.

"What's your sentence?" asked Tom, through a hole which had been cut by some boy in the past to communicate with a fellow sufferer in the next cell.

"Seven days," replied Joe, putting his mouth to the hole.

"That's a long time for a first experience down here. Forty-eight hours is the usual time. As Simcox considered my offence a rank one, he gave me sixty."

"You've been here before, I believe?"

"I should smile—several times."

"How do you like it?"

"I don't like it, but I've got to grin and bear it."

"I don't intend to if I can help it."

"You can't help yourself. You're locked in like me and you can't get out till the gardener lets you out."

"Oh, I don't know. This cell is only built of wood."

"It's strong enough to hold you just the same."

"Maybe it is. I've got a good, sharp, strong jack-knife. I'll bet I can cut my way out before the week is out."

"You can't do it. The gardener and the kitchen boy visit a prisoner three times a day with his bread and water, a hunk of meat thrown in at dinner time, and they'd notice any damage done to the woodwork. Then you would be searched and your knife taken away. The matter would be reported to Simcox, and you'd probably get an extra day," said Tom.

"Do they always examine the cells at each visit?"

"No. But they couldn't help seeing any cutting you did on the door."

"I notice that the back of the cell is stone. That's the foundation of the house, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Both sides are constructed of stout boards. This side is the partition between our cells. What's beyond the other side of my cell?"

"A big coal-bin."

"Is it full of coal now, do you know?"

"No, I should think not. It's late in the spring, and most of the coal has been used up."

"Is the coal-bin kept locked?"

"No, I don't think so."

"I might be able to loosen a board next to the bin."

"I don't believe you could do it."

"Well, I'm going to try and get out somehow."

"I wish you could, but there's small chance of it. Even if you did, what good would it do you? The damage would be repaired and you'd be sent back to do double time."

"Don't you believe it. I'd quit the school."

"Then your uncle would be notified, and when you got home he'd send you back."

"I wouldn't go home."

"Where would you go?"

"I don't know, but I'd hike for some other place."

"You haven't any money to speak of."

"That wouldn't make any difference."

"No? I should think it would make a lot of difference."

"I'd go to work for somebody and make some money."

The sound of footsteps caused the boys to break off their conversation.

There was a small grated hole in the front of each door.

Somebody came to Tom's cell and peered in through the opening.

Owing to the darkness within he could see nothing.

"Hello!" said a voice in squeaky tones.

"What do you want, Hen Marsh?" asked Tom, recognizing the voice.

"Oh, this is where you are, Tom Beaseley? How do you like it in there?" said Marsh, with a chuckle.

"None of your business. Get out of here."

"What would you give to get out?"

Tom made no reply.

"He, he, he!" laughed Marsh.

There was a small pitcher of water and a glass in both cells. Tom partly filled the glass and approached the grating.

"Are you there?"

"Yes, I'm here," said Marsh.

"Can you see me?"

"No; it's too dark."

"Put your face up close and look hard."

"I'm doing it."

Swish went the water into the sneak's face.

"Wow!" howled Marsh, falling back. "What did you do that for, you big stuff?" he added furiously.

"To make you keep your distance, you spy."

"I'll get square with you for that, see if I don't."

"You will, I don't think. Wait till I'm released and I'll make you sick of living. You and that putty-faced Potts lied about Joe Jackson and got him sent down here. We're going to fix you for that. I'll bet a dollar you and Potts painted those busts yourselves."

"Aw, bet your small change first."

"Get out of here and leave us alone."

"Go sit on a tack," said Marsh, moving on to Joe's cell.

"Hello, you lobster. What are you thinking about?"

Joe made no answer.

"I hear you're in for a week. Ain't I glad you got it in the neck. I'll bet you won't play any more tricks in this school. Why don't you say something?"

The entire contents of Joe's water-jug came through the grated opening and landed on Marsh's chest, running down inside of his shirt and soaking him good.

The sneak uttered a howl and danced around outside.

After abusing Joe in choice terms he went away.

The two prisoners laughed heartily over Marsh's discomfiture.

They continued talking until the noon bell rang and the morning classes were over.

The students hied themselves to the lavatory, where they washed their hands and faces preparatory to forming into line and marching into the refectory for dinner.

Twenty minutes later the gardener and the kitchen boy brought the prisoners their dinner, which consisted of a plate of meat, potatoes and bread and butter.

"What do we drink?" asked Joe.

"Water," said the gardener. "You've got a jugful and a glass."

"There's no water in my jug," said Joe.

"You don't mean to say you've drank it all up?"

"I mean to say that the jug is empty."

The gardener looked and saw it was so.

He told the kitchen boy to fill it at a faucet in the cellar, and then the prisoners were left to themselves again.

About the middle of the afternoon Potts visited them.

Marsh had warned him of the soaking he had received, and he was cautious.

He had brought a small piece of candle with him, and he lighted it and held it close to the grating.

That enabled him to see inside of Joe's cell.

Joe was lying on his iron cot.

Phil grinned when he saw where he was.

"Good-afternoon," he said.

"Go to thunder," responded Joe.

"Hen told me you handed him a bath."

"I'd like to hand you one, too."

"I think you need one yourself," said Potts.

He blew out the light, then raised a garden squirter, took aim in the dark at the spot where he had seen Joe's head, and sent a healthy stream in that direction.

He expected to hear Joe yell like fun.

But he was disappointed.

The moment the light went out Joe had sprung off the cot and grabbed the tumbler of water, intending to soak Phil.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Potts, in great glee.

Swish went the tumbler of water into his face, and part of it went into his open mouth and half strangled him.

He coughed and sputtered, and the squirter fell out of his hands.

Joe and Tom gave him the laugh.

"I'll fix you for that, Joe Jackson," he hissed, picking up the squirter and walking away as mad as a hornet.

"I'd like to have that sneak in here for ten minutes," said Joe to Tom; "how I would lay it in to him."

"We'll fix him when we get free," returned Tom.

A few minutes afterward Joe discovered that the pillow of his cot was soaked with water.

He was mightily surprised, for he couldn't account for it.

He told Tom.

"Potts must have done that."

"How could he do it?"

"He must have had a squirter with him, and he thought to give you a soaking."

"Then he got beautifully left. The wall at the head of my cot is wet, too. I guess he lighted the candle to see where I was. If I hadn't got off the cot in a hurry he'd have got me. I'm going to report this to the gardener and ask for a dry pillow. I can't use that one now."

Joe, however, had no occasion to use a fresh pillow, as events shaped themselves.

When supper time came the gardener was away on an errand to the village, and Joe and Tom waited so long for their supper, which was limited to bread and butter, that they began to fear they were not going to get any.

Finally about seven o'clock one of the male helpers appeared, accompanied by the kitchen boy, who acted as the "buttons" of the institute, or lad-of-all-work.

The boy carried a lantern, and the man two plates of bread and butter.

Tom's cell was opened first, the plate passed in to him, and the door relocked.

Then the door of Joe's cell was opened.

That lad had formed a resolution to make his escape if he could when his door was next unlocked.

The prospect of remaining seven days in solitary confinement, half of it at least without the presence of his friend Tom in the next cell, was unbearable to him.

When the man passed in the plate to him, Joe grabbed the buttered bread with one hand and sprang out of his cell, upsetting the man in his rush.

Quick as a wink Joe snatched the lantern from the youth and gave him a shove that landed him inside the cell.

He slammed the door and locked it.

Then while the man was getting up he opened Tom's cell and called him to come out.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE FREIGHT CAR.

"Here, what are you up to?" demanded the man. "Let that boy out and get back into your cell."

"Tom," said Joe, as his friend stepped out, eating his bread and butter and wondering at the invitation to freedom extended by Joe, "are you game to skip out with me?"

"Where to?" asked Tom.

"Anywhere, so long as we get away from the dark cells."

"There'll be an awful row if we leave the cellar without permission."

"Well, I'm going to leave whether you do or not."

"I won't desert you, no matter what the consequences."

"All right. The only obstacle in our way is this individual. He must be prevented from giving the alarm. Help me shove him into your cell."

"Oh, I say, none of your didoes," said the man. "If you two don't return where you belong, I'll have to make you."

"Grab him," cried Joe, seizing him by one arm, while Tom fastened on the other. "In with him."

The man was not very formidable, but he put up a struggle.

"You'll get into trouble over this, you chaps," he said.

"We'll risk it," returned Joe. "Get in there with you."

The man struggled hard to avoid going into Tom's cell, but the boys had the advantage of him, and in he went, the door being locked on him.

Leaving the lantern on the floor for the benefit of the new prisoners, the boys started for the cellar stairs.

Joe led the way up, opened the door and stepped into the entry.

There was no one in sight.

The students were all at evening study.

"I'd like to put it over Potts and Marsh before I left the classic limits of the institute," said Joe; "but there's little chance of that."

"Are you really going to cut?" asked Tom.

"Say, what would happen to me if I didn't? Aren't you coming with me?"

"Where are you bound for?"

"I haven't the slightest idea. All I care is to get as far away from Simcox as I can."

"But your uncle will be pretty angry with you."

"Let him," said Joe, opening the door and stepping out into the yard, followed by his friend. "I'm going to make my own way in the world."

"I'm with you. I'm sick of this school, anyway."

"Say, here's the window of the pantry open. I'm as hungry as a hunter, for I didn't eat more than a couple of mouthfuls of that bread. Give me a boost up and I'll see what I can hook in the eatable line," said Joe.

"You'll get caught."

"Don't you worry. Wouldn't you like a few more mouthfuls?"

"I should say I would, but——"

"Never mind your buts, give me a back."

Tom bent down, Joe mounted on his back and peered into the pantry where a swinging lamp was burning low.

The door that communicated with the kitchen was slightly ajar, and Joe heard the cook and house girls laughing and talking at their supper.

He clambered in at the window and opened one of the doors of the big ice-chest.

The first thing he saw was part of a joint of cold mutton.

He pulled it out by the end of the bone and, going to the window, said:

"Lay hold of this, Tom."

His friend took it.

A loaf of bread, an apple pie and a hunk of butter on a wooden platter followed.

A bottle of milk, two-thirds full, with a couple of table knives completed Joe's foraging efforts.

"Now we'll walk down the road a bit toward the village, and under the shelter of the hedge we'll have our supper," he said, as soon as he rejoined his friend.

They covered a quarter of a mile when the lights of the village showed in the near distance.

Then they sat down.

Joe cut off several slices of bread, then a hunk of the mutton for Tom and another hunk for himself.

"This tastes good," said Tom, with his mouth full.

"Bet your life it does. Have a drink?" and he held out the milk bottle.

They finished the mutton between them and ate half of the pie.

"Where are we going to sleep to-night?" asked Tom. "It's too cold to bunk out of doors."

"We'll find a barn somewhere."

"Barns are usually locked."

"Then we'll beg a lodging at a farm-house."

"They'll make us give an account of ourselves. The farmer will be sure to suspect that we belong to the institute, and will guess we are running away. He'll be likely to detain us while he sends word to Simcox."

The sound of wagon wheels approaching from the village attracted their notice.

"I wonder who this is?" said Joe.

It proved to be the gardener on his way back to the school. The boys recognized him in the starlight and drew their hats down over their eyes.

The hats, by the way, were not their own, but two they had taken off the hooks in the entry when they left the cellar.

The gardener, if he noticed them, took them for village boys.

The wagon rattled on and once more they were by themselves on the deserted road.

They got up and walked forward in the direction of the village.

Skirting the outskirts, they came to the railroad tracks.

On the siding stood a couple of box freight cars.

One was closed, with a tag attached.

The door of the other was open a few inches.

"This car would be a fair place to sleep if we didn't have to lie on the bare floor," said Joe. "Give me a back and I'll see what it looks like inside."

Mounting Tom's back, he pushed the door open far enough to get in.

Striking a match, he saw it was pretty well filled with bags of feed.

"We'll roost here for the night," he said, after telling Tom what was in the car. "Give me your hand."

He helped Tom up.

Shoving the door into its original position, they sat down on a couple of bags and began considering their future.

Three miles south of Rockdale village was a town called Wexbridge.

They proposed to go there in the morning and take a train for Auburn.

They could get the same train at the village, but did not consider it wise to be seen buying tickets at the station.

Inquiries would surely be made of the agent by Mr. Simcox, and he would tell the principal that two boys answering his descriptions had bought tickets for Rockland, and then the head of the institute would have a line on their destination.

After talking an hour they grew sleepy, and climbing up on the top of the bags, where they had lots of room, they took off their jackets, spread them over themselves, and were presently asleep.

In the meantime there was the dickens to pay at the institute.

When the man and the kitchen youth-of-all-work failed to return to their duties, their absence was remarked and reported to the housekeeper.

She sent one of the girls to the cellar to see if they were still there.

The girl saw the lantern burning on the floor, but no sign of those she was in search of.

Wondering where they were, she went over to the lantern.

Then she was appealed to by a voice from behind the grating of one of the cells.

"Let me out, Molly. Those boys locked me in here and escaped."

The girl recognized the voice of the kitchen man and went to the door.

She could not let him out, nor the youth who set up a howl in the next cell, because Joe had hung the key which opened both cells on the nail where Tom said it belonged, and the girl knew nothing about it.

"The key is not in the lock," said the girl.

"Then those boys have carried it away. Has the gardener got back yet?"

"I think not. He hasn't been to his supper."

"Then report the state of things to the housekeeper and tell her to notify Mr. Simcox that the two prisoners have got away and locked me and Billy in the cells, and carried off the key so we can't get out."

The girl returned to the kitchen and told the facts to the housekeeper.

That lady was a bit staggered by the condition of affairs, and she went at once to Mr. Simcox's study and told him.

"Do you mean to say that those two boys have got out of their cells and locked Smith and Billy in their places?" cried the principal, not a little staggered himself by the unheard-of action of his two rebellious students.

"That is what Mary Fallon reported to me when she returned from the cellar, sir."

Mr. Simcox jumped up and accompanied her to the kitchen, where he questioned the girl, then he went down in the cellar himself and verified the outrage.

"How came you to let those boys get away, Smith?" demanded the principal, angrily. "You were supposed to unlock only one door at a time."

"That's what I did, sir. The boy who was in this cell, whose name, I think, is Beaseley, gave me no trouble. I passed his supper to him, he took it, and I locked the door again. Then I went to the other cell, opened that and passed the plate in. The boy, there, Jackson, took the buttered bread and then tipped the plate in my face. To prevent it falling and breaking I let go of the door, whereupon Jackson gave me a shove that sent me staggering back. I tripped over Billy's foot and fell on my back. Jackson grabbed Billy, took the lantern from him, shoved him into the cell and locked him in. Then before I could reach him he unlocked the other cell and called Beaseley out. The two of them seized me and forced me in here, locking the door on me, then they went away, taking the key with them," said the man.

"I should think you could have handled them both. You're a man and they are only boys," snorted Mr. Simcox.

"They're very strong, and the pair of them were too much for me, sir."

"Well, this is a pretty how-de-do. However, they shall pay dearly for this open rebellion. Beaseley shall remain here a week, and Jackson shall have a severe caning when his week is up. I must find them now and get the key so that I can let you and Billy out."

At that moment the gardener, who heard about the trouble as soon as he entered the kitchen for his supper, appeared.

As he was a big, muscular chap, he was satisfied that the boys couldn't have tricked him like they did Smith.

The principal had the same opinion, and he regretted that Jackson and Beaseley were served with their supper by any one other than the gardener, who was in charge of those sent to the dark cells.

"So they carried off the key, did they?" said the gardener, glancing at the hook where it hung when not in use. "No, they didn't, sir. Here it is on the nail."

Smith and Billy were immediately released, and returned to the kitchen looking very foolish, while Mr. Simcox started upstairs, expecting to find Joe and Tom in their room.

Of course he didn't find them there, for by that time they were climbing into the freight car.

A search of the building, the grounds and the outbuildings failed to reveal the missing boys, and the principal at once concluded that they had run away.

He told the gardener to take Smith and the other man servant in the light wagon and try to find him.

The gardener then remembered he had seen two boys sitting against the hedge on the road to the village when he was returning to the institute.

He was sure they were the fugitives, so he headed for the village.

Several hours passed, during which Joe and Tom slept serenely on the top of the bags in the freight car.

Then the whistle of the north-bound freight train brought the station agent out of his cottage close by.

The two box cars on the siding were to be picked up and carried to the end of the road one hundred miles away.

The agent with his waybills walked down to the siding to meet the conductor when he got out of the caboose.

He flashed his lantern on the two box cars and noticed that one of them was not locked.

"That's just like Jenkins," he muttered. "I told him to be sure and spring the lock on that car door, and here he has left it ajar as an invitation to tramps to take a free ride."

He pulled the door open and flashed his lantern all around inside.

Apparently there was no one in there, and not considering it necessary to make a search on the top of the bags, where the darkness hid the two sleeping boys from his sight, he shut the door tight, put the hasp in place and snapped the lock.

Fifteen minutes later the two cars, attached to the freight, were rolling away from Rockdale, and the boys were unaware that they were on the move, and in a direction opposite to that they intended to go.

CHAPTER V.

THE RIDE THAT ENDED IN A SURPRISE.

The freight train ran along for an hour or so at an easy gait and then stopped at a town about ten miles from Rockdale.

The two cars taken on at the latter place were at the end of the train next to the caboose.

Those three were left on the main track, while a couple of cars were dropped and a half loaded one taken on.

The freight then backed down and connected with the three on the main track.

They came together with a jolt which woke up Joe and Tom.

"What was that?" asked Tom.

"Blessed if I—— Hello! this car is being moved," said Joe, sitting up.

They heard three toots some distance ahead, and then the train started on.

"Oh, I say, this car is being carried away from the siding. Hadn't we better get out?" said Tom.

"No," said Joe, "we're in for a free ride. This freight train is doubtless going on to Auburn, and we'll get there without the trip costing us a cent. That's lucky, for we haven't much money between us. Only enough to have paid our fares by the passenger train in the morning. Under the present circumstances we probably will reach Auburn two or three hours ahead of that train, for we'll travel all night. Turn over and go to sleep again."

"But this car might not go all the way to Auburn," said Tom.

"Then we'll take the passenger train the balance of the way. Every mile we travel in this car is so much saved to us."

The boys lay down again and soon went to sleep.

It never occurred to them that the train might be going in the opposite direction they were calculating upon.

Perhaps it was because their thoughts were centered on Auburn that this was so.

Six miles further on a car was dropped off, and as the train went on one or more cars were dropped and occasionally one taken on.

The jolting awoke the boys a couple of more times, but as they knew the cause of it, they went to sleep again.

Morning dawned over the country and, after a while, the sun rose.

At seven o'clock the freight was still several miles from its destination.

It was switched on to a village siding to wait for the early passenger from Bingham, the end of the route.

The boys woke up.

"I wonder what the hour is?" asked Joe.

"The car isn't moving. I guess it was dropped off somewhere along the road," said Tom.

"It's morning. I see the light shining under the door."

"Why isn't it shining through the door? You left it the way we found it, partly open, didn't you?"

"That's right, but it isn't open now. One of the train hands must have closed it."

"I hope he didn't lock the door," said Tom, uneasily. "We'd be in a nice pickle if he did."

"Oh, I don't know. The station agent is bound to open the door before long."

"He won't open it till these bags are called for, and they may not be called for to-day."

"Well, I'll see whether the door is locked or not," said Joe, slipping down and trying it. "Yes, it's fast all right."

"Then we'd better pound on it. If there is any one around he'll hear the racket and then we'll be released."

"And we might be turned over to the police for stealing a ride."

"That would be rough on us."

At that moment they heard the whistle of a locomotive.

The passenger was coming in at the station a short distance away.

In a couple of minutes they heard the passenger pass.

Then they felt their car in motion again.

"We haven't been dropped off after all," said Joe. "The freight was standing on a siding waiting for that train to pass."

"We ought to reach Auburn soon, don't you think so?" asked Tom.

"I haven't any idea how long it takes a freight train to make the distance from Rockdale; but as it is only forty miles between the two places, and we've been running all night, off and on, I should say we were due to arrive pretty soon."

"I've been told that freight trains run ten to fifteen miles an hour between stations. Now if this car was hooked on around midnight, and it's seven or eight o'clock now, the train ought to have run more than forty miles."

"But we can't tell how many stops it made, nor how long it stayed at any place. Sometimes a freight remains a good while on a siding waiting for some train which has the right of way to pass."

"There are no passenger trains running on this road up Rockdale way after nine o'clock. How do you know but we have passed Auburn? We have no evidence that this freight goes only as far as that city. It may be going on to Portland."

"If it's bound for that place we'll have to go with it."

"Suppose it goes clear through to Boston?"

"I don't believe this car is going to Boston. It's only half loaded."

"But suppose it did go through, we'd be nearly starved by the time we got there."

"Don't worry. We've got half a pie and two-thirds of a loaf of fresh bread. That will do us till noon, and before then something may happen that will end in our release from the car."

The food was produced and they made their breakfast of it. Bread and pie for the morning meal was a new experience, but when one has nothing else it fills in.

The main difficulty was they had nothing to drink, and that was sure to prove a serious matter if they had to remain long cooped up in the freight car.

The train ran steadily along for perhaps three-quarters of an hour, then the locomotive blew a long whistle.

"We're coming to another stopping-place," said Joe.

"I hope it is the end of our trip," said Tom.

It was, as they found out a little later.

The freight rolled into the yard at Bingham and came to a stop.

The locomotive went off to the roundhouse, and a yard en-

gine came along soon afterward and carried the caboose off by itself.

All the varied sounds of a busy railroad yard reached the ears of the boy, and as there was no further move made by their car, they believed it had reached its destination, and they looked eagerly forward to their release.

After a time the yard engine came up and carried three cars of the train, theirs among the number, to the platform on one side of the train shed.

They heard men passing and repassing frequently now, and the sound of hand trucks rolling along.

It was close to noon before the door of their car was opened.

The sunshine flashed in, and in another moment they were discovered.

"Well, I'll be jiggered!" cried one of the station men, gazing sharply at the boys. "So you chaps have been stealing a ride, eh?"

"If you call being locked into a car and run off with stealing a ride, then we're guilty," replied Joe.

"How came you to be locked in this car? You must have sneaked in while it was lying at Rockdale, for that's where the car came from."

Joe explained how he and his companion came upon the car standing on the siding, with the door partly open, and as they were looking for a place to pass the night, as they had no money to pay for a lodging, they got in and went to sleep on the bags of feed.

"We didn't expect the car would be moved during the night," he went on. "This morning we intended to take the first passenger train for Auburn."

"For Auburn, eh?" grinned the man.

"Yes. Is this Auburn, or have we been carried further on?"

"If you were bound for Auburn you've been traveling in the wrong direction to get there."

"Traveling in the wrong direction?" said Joe.

"Auburn is forty odd miles south of Rockdale, where you got on this car. You are now at Bingham, about 80 miles north of Rockdale."

"Holy smoke! is that so?" gasped the boy.

"That is so. This is the terminus of the road. You'll have to pay your way back now, and it will cost you three times as much as if you had taken a passenger at Rockdale going the right way."

"But we haven't money enough to buy tickets over such a distance."

"Well, that's your funeral. Come now, get a move on. You may consider yourselves lucky that I don't turn you over to the station agent. He might use you roughly, for it's considered a crime to sneak a ride on a freight car. I believe your story, for you don't look like young tramps, and I am willing to allow that you wouldn't have gone to sleep in this car had you known where it was bound."

"I'm afraid we're in a bad hole. We've got to eat, and we haven't the price of more than half a dozen meals."

"You look like pretty decent sort of chaps, who have homes. Why don't you telegraph to your parents for money to get back with?"

"I haven't any parents. I live with my uncle when I'm at home. He's a banker at Clearhaven, and that's some ways from here."

"You can easily reach him with a telegram. You can explain matters when you get back. I dare say he'll send you enough money to see you through, and your friend, too. Well, I can't stand here talking all day. I wish you both luck."

"Come on, Tom," said Joe, and the boys left the car and took their way out of the yard.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE ROAD TO THE LOGGING CAMP.

Bingham was a small town on the Kennebec of about 1,000 inhabitants.

Its chief industry was lumber, and it had many saw and planing mills.

The country round about was sparsely settled and covered by woods of considerable extent.

The first thought of both lads when they reached the street was to make for a small restaurant they saw across the way.

"Do we eat?" said Tom.

"I think we'd better," nodded Joe. "We can consider the situation afterward."

"We're all of seventy-five miles from the institute, and couldn't get there if we wanted to return without more money than we've got."

"I don't want to return. If I can pick up a job in this town I'll stay here for a while."

"I'll have to look out for something to do myself or I'll be apt to go hungry."

"You won't go hungry as long as I have the price."

They entered the restaurant and had a square meal of meat, vegetables, pudding and coffee.

The price was thirty cents each, and Joe, having the most money, stood for it.

"We must hunt up a cheap lodging," said Tom.

Joe asked the proprietor of the restaurant if he could refer them to a cheap lodging-house.

The Bingham House down the street will accommodate you for fifty cents a night, but if you take a room by the week it will be cheaper," said the man.

Fifty cents apiece for a night's lodging was rather a princely sum for them to pay in the state their finances were in, and Joe asked the restaurant man if there wasn't a cheaper place.

"Oh, yes, there are several lodging-houses where you can get a room for a quarter, with a discount by the week. You'll find one in the same block with the Bingham House," was the reply.

The boys started off to find the place.

On the way they came to an intelligence office on the ground floor.

There was a large sign in the window which read: "Men wanted by the Somerset Lumber Co. Good pay. Also a couple of boys to make themselves generally useful."

"Here's a chance for us," said Joe. "Let's go in and see what the jobs amount to."

They entered the office.

"We noticed the sign you've got in the window which states that the Somerset Lumber Co. wants a couple of boys," said Joe to a man at a desk.

The man looked them over critically.

"You'd have to rough it up in the logging camp, and you two don't look as if you were used to hard work," he said. "Do you live in town here?"

"No, we're strangers from down the State."

"What brought you up here?"

"A freight train. We thought we were traveling south; instead of that we landed here a short time ago."

"How came you to travel on a freight train?"

"We were accidentally locked in a box car."

"How was it you were locked in?"

"We thought the car was anchored on the siding for the night, and as we had no money we could afford to lay out for lodgings, we got into the car to sleep there. When we woke up and found it moving we supposed we were going south to Auburn; but were fooled, for the car was brought here. That's how we happen to be in these diggings. Now that we're so far north, we'll have to get work or we will go hungry."

"Well, if you chaps want to try life among the loggers I'll send you by the covered wagon that starts this afternoon," said the man.

"What will we have to do?" asked Joe.

"You'll have to make yourselves useful."

"How much pay will we get?"

"Your board and \$4 a week."

"The \$4 will be clear, then?"

"Yes. You won't be able to spend any of it except for tobacco and whisky."

"We don't smoke or drink."

"Then there won't be no deductions, except for necessary articles you may need. But there ain't any use in you going with those duds on. You want a rough working outfit—woollen shirts, pants and jacket that'll stand wear, and a pair of stout boots."

"We have no money to pay for those things."

"I'll fit you out if you engage to go."

"I'm on if my friend will go."

"I'm with you," said Tom.

"Sit down and wait till I draw up the papers for you to sign."

In the course of ten minutes a filled-in agreement was handed each of the boys to affix their signatures to.

They read it over and saw that it was a labor contract for the season.

A clause was inserted which stated if they quit before the time was up they were to forfeit half of their wages.

A printed paragraph stated that whatever they got from the company's store would be charged against their account.

"The outfit you're going to get for us will be charged against us the same as if we got it from the store?" asked Joe.

"Of course," said the man. "It will be deducted with anything you may buy when you are paid off."

The boys signed the papers, and then the man called his

son, who acted as his assistant, and told him to take Joe and Tom around to a certain store and see that they got what they required for the work they were about to engage in.

They were soon fitted out with the necessary clothes, and bought other things their conductor said they would need, including a couple of grips to hold their things in.

"How about the suits we have on?" asked Joe. "We can't get them in our bags."

"I'll take you around to a pawn shop. You can raise four or five dollars on them, and they'll be kept in good condition till you get back."

They went to the loan shop in question, and the broker took them into a back room where they took off their good clothes and donned their working apparel.

Each received \$5 on his clothes.

The agent's son then showed them around town, taking them to several of the mills.

Here they saw great logs reduced to rough boards.

These and other kinds of lumber formed the chief articles of freight carried south from the town.

They learned that the logs themselves were sent down the various streams that emptied into the Kennebec, and they saw thousands of the logs dammed in the river along the banks where the saw mills were located.

In fact, the whole river front of the town was covered with logs of different sizes, each one marked with the stamp of the lumber company to which it belonged.

Dozens of men were walking about on these logs, which were jammed together, sorting out the logs and marking them with red, or black, or yellow streaks of paint, so that their ownership would be more easily distinguished.

The boys learned more about the lumber industry that afternoon than they had ever dreamed about heretofore.

About quarter of five the agent's son advised them to get their supper at a restaurant, for the wagon would start at six, and they would get nothing to eat till they reached the logging camp.

"You'd better have a lunch put up," he said, "for the wagon might be delayed on the route. In any case, you will hardly reach the camp until along in the forenoon to-morrow, and you will find that a lunch will come in handy."

Joe and Tom followed his advice and had a number of sandwiches, a whole pie, and two pint bottles of coffee prepared for them.

They stowed the food in their grips and were then guided to the place the wagon started from.

The vehicle was a kind of "prairie schooner," being arched over with canvas, supported by stout hoops.

Half a dozen stalwart men in rough clothes were making the trip with the boys.

One of them was seated beside the driver.

They all appeared to know each other, though their acquaintance might only have been a brief bar-room one.

Joe and Tom were the last to get into the vehicle, and they sat down at the back, with their legs dangling out.

The driver cracked his whip, and his team of four horses started on their journey, which was to lead them through a forest wilderness.

"How the boys at the institute would gape if they saw us now," said Joe, with a cheerful grin.

"And how old Simcox would tear around after his gardener to send him after us," said Tom.

"I suppose my uncle on the lookout for me to show up at home, for, of course, he has already been informed about my running away."

"My step-father will be as mad as a hornet, if he isn't already, when he learns the news."

"What do you care? After we have put in six months in the woods, and have drawn \$100, less what is charged up against us, which oughtn't to be over \$25, we'll go back with money in our pockets, and experience in our heads, and face the music."

"My mother will be so glad to see me then that she won't allow her husband to punish me."

"I haven't a mother, more's the pity, but my uncle isn't a bad sort. I've lived with him six years, and I guess I've tried his patience with the pranks I've cut up, but he has never punished me to any extent. I don't expect I'll be asked to go to another school. My uncle will probably take me into his bank and have me learn the business."

"Make a banker out of you, eh?"

"A bank clerk more like."

They watched the town fade away behind them, and the country landscape around them merge into a woody track of land.

The road twisted this way and that, following the course of the least resistance.

It was not a made road, except in spots, but the hardness of the surface made travel comparatively easy over the first stage of the journey.

With the coming of twilight the driver stopped at a water course to give the horses drink, and he took advantage of the rest to light three lanterns.

One of these he hung at the front of the vehicle, another at the rear, while a third was suspended in the center of the wagon.

Soon after they started on again night closed in upon them and the woods began to close in denser upon the wagon trail.

No sounds broke the stillness but the tramp of the horses and the creaking of the vehicle as it swung to the right or to the left.

The lights cast weird shadows about the trees, and at times the boys fancied they saw a man's rough countenance staring at them from the shades.

Inside the wagon the men were gathered in a group playing cards for small stakes, smoking and passing their pocket flasks around.

The boys were not asked to join in the game, and would have politely declined the invitation had it been extended to them.

Sometimes the wagon covered the ground rapidly, at other times it went slowly.

The pace all depended on the character of the trail, which grew rougher and rougher as they proceeded.

The boys were seated inside now, with their backs against opposite sides of the canvas wall.

They watched the card playing till they grew sleepy and fell into a doze, which soon became a deep sleep.

The game did not break up till near midnight, when the wagon drew up at a wayside shack which did duty as a road-house.

All the men, including the driver, adjourned to the bar, where a sort of lunch was served with drinks.

The horses were watered by a boy belonging to the house, who, when he finished the job, got up on the seat and looked into the wagon.

He spied the two sleepers, and saw they were boys.

Getting inside the vehicle, he drew near them and started to feel Tom's pockets.

He worked as gently as he could, for he did not want to get caught at it.

He had extracted a quarter from Tom's vest, and was looking for more when Joe woke up and saw what he was doing.

He gave the light-fingered lad a violent kick in the chest and then jumped for him.

The scrimmage that followed awoke Tom.

"What in thunder is the matter?" he ejaculated, rubbing his eyes.

"I found this lad going through your pockets," said Joe, who was astride of the young thief. "See if you've lost anything."

Tom missed the quarter, and mentioned the fact.

"Cough up or I'll bang your head against the floor of the wagon," said Joe, grabbing the youth by both jaws.

"I'll give it up if you let me go," said the lad.

"All right," replied Joe, partly releasing him.

The boy returned the quarter to Tom, then they threw him out of the wagon.

"Where are all hands?" asked Joe, noting that the vehicle was not only at rest, but empty of passengers and driver.

"We must be at some stopping place," said Tom.

They looked out and saw the rambling two-story shack ablaze with light.

The clinking of glasses reached their ears, which convinced them the men were inside drinking.

Inside of ten minutes the passengers and the driver came flocking out.

They clambered into the wagon, and the party was presently on the move again through the deep obscurity of the woods.

CHAPTER VII.

AT THE LOGGING CAMP.

The wagon traveled slowly during the night, the driver being the only one awake.

The horses had been over the route so often that they knew the way, and needed little guidance from him.

When morning broke they were traversing a wild and lone some stretch with woods on either side.

A small river skirted the woods on one side.

The sun rose and morning came on apace.

Joe and Tom woke up and saw the other passengers sleeping around them.

Deciding that they might as well eat, they proceeded to do so.

Then they went forward and got on the seat with the driver.

"How much further have we to go?" asked Joe.

"Some distance."

"When do you expect to reach the camp?"

"Round eleven o'clock."

"What time is it now?"

The driver consulted his cheap watch and said it was half-past seven.

"Don't seem to be anybody living around here."

"Very few, and they're along the river."

"What river?"

"The one yonder," said the driver, pointing with his whip.

The boys looked, but could only see indications of water at intervals.

"I suppose we won't find the work easy at the camp?"

"I'll bet you won't," grinned the man. "What induced you to come? Did the man who hired you tell you that you'd have a picnic?"

"No. He told us we'd have to do real work."

"You don't look like chaps who've been used to hard work. Your hands look white and soft. Where do you hail from?"

"We hail from a boarding school."

"Yes? This ain't vacation time."

"I know it. We ran away because we, or at least I, didn't get a square deal."

"Ran away, did you? Haw, haw, haw! I reckon you'll wish you were back afore long. What did the master do to you—lick you?"

"No. He accused me of a trick I was not guilty of, and took the word of a pair of sneaks before mine. He sentenced me to a week in a dark cell in the cellar of the school building, on low diet. I wouldn't stand for it and made my escape. Tom here, who got three days in the next cell for some monkey business, concluded to go away with me, and here we are; but we wouldn't have been here if we hadn't gone to sleep in a freight car, got locked in and were brought all the way to Bingham, where we landed almost on our uppers financially. When we looked around for some work to pay our way, this job was offered to us and we took it. That's the whole story."

"Well, well; what'll your folks do when they learn you've run away from school?"

"I haven't any folks; only an uncle who's a banker in a small town. I haven't any idea what he'll do. I don't imagine he'll be able to do anything. He'll have to wait till I turn up. Tom's parents will probably look for him, but I think the chances are against their finding any trace of him while he's up in this trackless region. Bingham seems to be the end of civilization in this direction. I guess we'll be dead to the world while we're at the logging camp."

"The work will put bone and muscle into you. You won't look like you do now when you go back. You'll be tanned brown, and your hands will be as hard as brickbats. You'll be able to lick the daylights out of the schoolmaster. Haw, haw, haw!"

"I could do that now. He has a gardener, however, who's a tough nut. We never would have got away if he had been around when we made our break for freedom."

"Six months from now he'll find you chaps hard nuts to handle."

"I don't imagine we'll go near him. At least I won't."

"Are you sick of schooling?"

"I've had about all I'm likely to get. Tom and I are pretty well educated outside of a college course."

"It's a great thing to be educated. If I had had more schooling I wouldn't be driving this team for a living up here in the backwoods. Seems to me you chaps were foolish to run away from school. I've always heard that boys have a pretty good time at boarding schools, playing baseball and football and mixing in other kinds of sports. I'd give a whole lot to be young again and have a chance in one of them schools; but a fellow can only be young once, and if he doesn't make the most of his chances he's apt to regret it."

The other passengers were waking up now, and some of them began talking to the driver, so Joe gave his attention to Tom and the prospect around.

The wagon entered the tall woods again and the morning wore on.

They began meeting men occasionally along the route.

They were all tough and weatherbeaten looking fellows.

They arrived at the camp a little before noon.

It consisted of a collection of log houses.

The largest was occupied as the quarters of the men employed there.

Adjoining it was the cooking and eating house.

One of the buildings was occupied by the superintendent and two clerks.

Next to it was the company's store.

The wagon stopped before the door of the office.

All hands got out with their grips and bags and were admitted one by one.

Joe and Tom hung back and were the last to go in.

The superintendent looked at them critically.

He saw they were boys who had not been used to roughing it.

He questioned them sharply after looking at the papers they had signed, which had been forwarded with others in custody of the driver of the wagon.

They put on a bold front and made no admissions about running away from school.

In the end Tom was assigned to help the cook, and Joe was told he would be sent into the woods with a gang.

The men began coming in from the woods to dinner.

The foreman of one of the gangs was summoned by the superintendent and Joe was turned over to him.

A boy attached to the camp told Joe and Tom to follow him with their grips.

They were taken to the second story of the men's quarters, where they saw a double line of cots, supplied with bed clothes, ranged along the walls, about two feet apart.

A number was tacked against the wall at the head of each cot.

Joe was given cot No. 11, and Tom got No. 21.

They were told to shove their grips under their cots.

They were then taken down to the dining-room in the next building.

Here a long table of boards, resting on "horses," occupied the center of the room.

Joe was given a seat at the end of the table.

Tom got no seat, but was ordered to report to the cook.

He soon found that a part of his duty was to wait on the table.

Nearly everything was set out before the workers sat down to eat, but Tom had to carry a huge coffee-pot around and fill the cups.

He also had to bring on additional bread, and pass things when asked to do so.

After the men were through, the superintendent and clerks ate at a smaller table, and Tom had to wait on them.

He ate his own dinner with the cook and his assistant, helped clear up and wash the dishes, after which he had a loafing spell until he was called on to peel potatoes, and attend to other kitchen service for supper.

His work was continuous from half-past five in the morning until about three in the afternoon, and from half-past four until eight or later at night.

After dinner that day Joe accompanied chopping gang No. 3 to the woods, and he found his work was to drive the mules that were employed in hauling the logs to the river, where men were stationed to get them into the water and line them up, head on, down the stream.

Joe had no loafing time at all until the gang knocked off at dusk.

Then he drove the mules into camp, to their quarters, tied them in their stalls, fed and watered them.

By the time he got to supper the men were about through.

After supper his time was his own.

He could go to bed when he pleased.

The men passed their evenings and Sundays either in the big room below their sleeping quarters, or out of doors, as it pleased them.

A small library of second-hand books of standard fiction, travels and other works stood on a shelf, but were not often in use, the men preferring to play cards, or dominoes, or checkers when they remained in the room.

Tom was not through work till half-past eight the first evening, and Joe hung around waiting for him.

They swapped experiences, and while Joe had no kick coming, Tom was dissatisfied with his job, which he declared was a menial one, and he didn't like it at all.

"I've got to turn out half an hour earlier in the morning than you," he told Joe. "I have to work a couple of hours later, though I have a swing each afternoon of from an hour and a half to two hours. The worst of it is that I have to work on Sunday about the same as week days, while you have nothing to do all that day."

"Nothing to do? I'll have the mules to feed and look after," said Joe.

He found when Sunday came that, if the day was all right, he simply had to take the mules to an open spot where the grass grew and tether them to stakes within reach of a rivulet and leave them there till near dark.

He also discovered that he was liable to be called on at any time during the day to render some small service to somebody in authority.

The company's store adjoined the superintendent's house.

It was in charge of a large boy.

Here were kept all the groceries consumed in the camp.

Also a supply of wearing apparel and other things.

The men could find here a general supply of smoking and chewing tobacco, pipes and a low grade of cigars.

Whisky in half-pint flasks were also freely sold, but any man thus invited to drink found intoxicated was fined and locked up to sleep his jag off.

Everything bought by the men was charged up against them, and the sum total deducted at the end of the working season, when the men returned to civilization to pass the winter.

The boys arrived on Thursday, and when Sunday came each had had a taste of his line of business at the camp.

Joe was very glad he had not been sent to the kitchen, and he did not blame Tom for kicking at his destiny.

"I'm dead sick of the job," Tom told Joe on Saturday night.

"If I could get back to school I'd go there and stand the caning I'd probably catch. I don't mind working hard, but I prefer to have a voice in the selection of the labor. I am treated like a scrub by the cook and his helper, and I feel like one. It's degrading business and I hate it. If I could run away I would; but there's no chance of finding one's way back to Bingham through that desolate stretch of forest. A fellow would have to carry several days' supply of food, and there is no way of getting it. Now you're employed on a regular job, and even if you're ordered about like a nigger, which I haven't heard you say you were, you're on a par with the other workers. You sit down with them at table, and have the satisfaction of knowing you are not a servant to every one, from the superintendent down, like myself."

"I'm sorry you haven't the same work to do that I have, even if we were in different gangs, as, of course, we would be," said Joe. "The work is continuous, and a whole lot harder than what you have to do, but I don't dislike it, and it will be easier when I get accustomed to it. The mules are broken to the business and have given me no trouble so far."

"You're off to-morrow all day, while I've got to work the same as any other day, except that I may get an extra hour off in the afternoon, and we get through earlier in the evening because Sunday night's supper is a light affair."

"Oh, well, six months will soon pass, and we'll quit the experience for good. You will probably go back to the institute next term, but it is hardly likely I will. My uncle expected me to finish this year, anyway."

Tom was not called till half-past six next morning, and the rest of the regular workers were not routed out till half-past seven.

Breakfast was an hour later on Sunday.

After the meal Joe took his mules out to grass.

He naturally made the acquaintance of the other boys who performed similar duties with gangs one and two.

One was named Jimmy White and the other Tommy Bunce.

They were very ordinary lads, who had not enjoyed the advantages of education to any great extent.

This was their second season with the company, and both were thoroughly experienced in their work.

They gave Joe many points that were of service to him, and the three hobnobbed together all Sunday morning, while poor Tom worked away in and around the kitchen and dining-room.

CHAPTER VIII.

TOM GOES INTO THE RIVER.

Three months passed away and the boys had become well accustomed to their work in the camp.

Tom, finding that kicking would do no good, ceased to howl over his duties, and gradually made himself popular with the cook and his assistant, and they ceased to hustle him around any more than was necessary.

Joe got along fine hauling the logs to the river, and was half-fellow-well-met with all the men in the camp.

Scraps occasionally took place between the loggers over trifling causes, and the combatants pounded one another till they got tired of the amusement, and no one ventured to interfere.

The three mule-hauling boys only met in the camp, and they never had any disagreements.

On the whole, Joe was not sorry he had come to the logging camp, while Tom figured on what he would do with the bunch of money he would get when the camp broke up in the late fall.

Neither expected to return in the following spring.

It was now summer and the weather was warm enough most of the time to suit anybody, and it felt hot to the men who were doing the hard work.

On Saturday afternoon Tom came out to where Joe was busy with his mules.

He often put in his two hours of relaxation that way.

He liked to talk with Joe, and he was interested in the hauling.

When a good-sized log was in process of transit he would seat himself astride of it and ride to the river.

This afforded him great fun.

Though not always, for sometimes the moving log would bump against an obstruction, and Tom would get a tumble.

Such accidents compelled him to be spry to avoid getting hurt, for the log was liable to roll over on his leg and break it.

Joe being at the head of his tandem mule team, sometimes consisting of six animals, when the log was extra big and heavy, he could not tell if his companion was treated to a tumble till he heard a yell from Tom.

On the Saturday afternoon in question Tom had made two trips from the cutting ground or clearing to the river, which was a narrow and turbulent stream which took its rise up in the mountains a few miles away.

The current was swift and was deep enough to drown anybody who fell in and couldn't swim.

Even a fairly good swimmer would be at some disadvantage in it with his garments on.

A large number of logs rose and fell with the action of the water, and the men in charge of them were getting ready to set them free so they could float down to the Kennebec and Bingham, where they would be caught by the boom stretched across the river at that point.

The logs were close together and passage across them looked easy while they lay at rest except for the irregular motion imparted to them by the current rolling underneath the mass.

To the loggers, who were accustomed to the peculiar movements of the logs, it was easy to scurry about upon them—as easy as running about on the stable ground, and their careless movements gave a false idea of the security of the mass as a stamping spot.

Several times Tom had been on the point of getting out on the logs to experience the sensation, but had been warned by Joe not to do it.

"They're wet and slippery, and if you don't bear your weight on them just right they will roll more or less," he said. "If your foot slipped between them you would run the chance of breaking or spraining your ankle, perhaps your leg."

"They don't look so dangerous," said Tom.

"Looks don't count in their case."

"But look at the way the men skip around on them. They never meet with an accident."

"They're accustomed to doing it. Their legs are educated to the movements of the logs. They get around by the sense of touch. You can notice that they're very spry in their movements, as a rule."

"Look at that chap out there standing still on two logs."

"He's got them balanced just right."

"Well, those two boom logs, that are fast to both banks, they're safe enough."

"I suppose you'd like to run across them to the other side of the stream?"

"I would for the fun of the thing."

"Well, take my advice and don't do it."

"Haven't you been on the logs yet?"

"Yes. It is necessary for me to lend a hand sometimes, and the men taught me how to walk them; but I'm far from being expert at it yet, and I don't care to do it. The sensation is peculiar, especially when you go on them for the first time. You feel kind of helpless, and it takes all your nerve to keep your wits working right."

Tom, however, felt an irresistible longing to go across the stream on the logs.

He wanted to be able to say when he got back home that he had accomplished the feat.

The more he looked at them the stronger the temptation became.

He walked to the head of the mass, where the two logs

stretched across the stream acted as a boom and held the bobbing logs from getting away.

At the proper time a couple of men would cross over and release the opposite ends of the boom logs, paying out the long rope.

The confined logs would then slip down the stream, those nearest the men going first, generally speaking, though not invariably.

Between the pull of the stream and the pressure of the logs, it was some job for the men to let the boom logs swing and prevent the other logs from being caught by the rope; but they usually managed it without much trouble.

The slipping of the boom was about to take place, while Tom was on the spot, and the idea struck him that he would prefer to see it from the other side.

He remained on the river bank while Joe went back to the clearing with his mules.

Finally he asked one of the men if he didn't think he could get across all right.

"I wouldn't try it," was the reply. "You aren't used to the business. Them logs are as skittish as young colts. You see, they're more restive here on account of the roughness of the stream. Besides, if you got across you'd have to return on the two boom logs after they had been brought back in place and secured again."

"Even so; they're more stable than the other logs, because being tied they don't roll much, and I think the only dangerous point of the logs is their rolling quality," said Tom.

The man shrugged his shoulders and walked away.

Just then Tom heard Joe shouting to his mules as they were dragging another log to the river side.

At the same moment the foreman of the river squad told his two helpers to cross to the other side and release the boom.

If he was going to make the attempt to cross on the logs, this was Tom's last chance for the present, and he realized it.

On the spur of the moment he jumped down on the end of the boom logs and started across on them.

This, as he had calculated, was the easiest way, for being secured at both ends the long logs were fairly stable—that is, they couldn't roll like the free logs, but being at the end of the wobbling mass, they were constantly being lifted by the upshoot of the current escaping from under the logs above.

This lifting motion was not regular, nor was it uniform.

It was more or less jerky and uncertain, which amounted to nothing to one used to it.

The boiling of the water had a tendency to confuse one's vision.

It confused Tom at the very moment, and an upward jump of the two logs threw him a bit off his balance.

The result was the boy lost his presence of mind and pitched head foremost into the river.

Joe, who saw Tom start across and was watching him with some anxiety, uttered a shout when his friend took his header.

All the men saw his mishap.

Before they could draw a second breath almost, Tom came to the surface several yards away and was whirled off down the stream.

Joe started on a dead run down the bank and soon came up with his friend, who was making strenuous but vain efforts to swim to that bank.

"Keep afloat, old man, and I'll run ahead to the bend and try to get you there, for the stream swings in that way," he called out, encouragingly.

At the call of the foreman the two hands who had crossed the logs to release the boom came back, and the bunch started on a run after Joe.

They shouted to Tom as they passed him to keep his courage up and they would save him.

A third of a mile down a second collection of logs held by a boom had just been released, and the boom logs were left lying against the bank so that the course would be clear for the passage of the logs above.

The men were making for this point with the intention of getting one of the boom logs across the imperilled boy's path for him to lay hold of.

This could be done quickly because the stream was shallow for several yards out, and there was a rocky ledge along the bottom for the men going into the water to brace their feet against.

When the men overtook Joe, the foreman told him to follow them.

"Why not wait here at the turn?" said Joe.

"No good. He won't come in close enough for us to catch

him. The water is too deep at this point for us to venture in. We'll get him at the boom below."

There was nothing for Joe to do but accompany the men, and he did so.

They reached the vacant boom below in a few minutes.

Of all the logs that had been there an hour before, not one was now in sight.

They were on their way to the Kennebec.

"Now, boys, we have no time to waste," said the foreman, picking up a great steel log gripper, which was a load in itself for an ordinary man unaccustomed to its use.

One of the two long logs lay within easy reach.

"Grab the end of it and lift it between those two rocks," said the foreman, stepping into the water and preparing to grip the log and help the work along.

The end of the log was hoisted up on the smooth, rocky surface, and then drawn in far enough to give the men a purchase on it.

Throwing their weight on it, they lifted it clear of the current and swung it around till it pointed across the stream—not straight across, but diagonally up the river to allow for the swing of the current when it hit the water.

The foreman went out as far as it was prudent to do, gripped the log with his implement, and shouted to the men to shove the log a foot.

This was done, and he saw by the dipping of the end of the log that the men were losing their purchase on it.

Releasing the gripper, he came in a yard, gripped the log again and ordered the men to give the shove that would send the far end into the water.

The foreman braced himself to hold the log against the tide.

The moment it struck the water it required muscles of steel to hold the log.

"Another shove, my lads," he cried.

The end of the log shot further out.

The foreman had to go with it, and he reached a spot beyond which he dare not proceed.

He measured the distance from the end of the log to the further shore.

Then he shouted for information as to the whereabouts of Tom, who he calculated could not be far off now.

Joe was standing on a rock watching for a sight of his friend.

He saw his head coming along three-quarters of the way across the stream.

He was afraid he would miss the end of the log by a foot or two.

He was also afraid that even if he hit the boom log he would be too exhausted to grasp it, or to hold on.

He determined to get out to the end of the log himself and seize Tom the instant he came within reach.

He came down from his perch and ran out on the log, telling the foreman as he sprang over the gripper what he intended doing and where Tom was in the river.

There was a rock near the further bank where the boom logs were anchored at that side, and the foreman determined to simplify the situation by getting the log all the way to it if he could.

"Another shove, my hearties!" cried the foreman, releasing the gripper.

The men shoved.

But with nothing holding it the log swung down with the stream.

The foreman dashed forward and gripped it again.

The log was nearly straight across when he stayed its progress.

Joe, far out on the end, saw that Tom would pass out of his reach unless the log could be sent farther out.

He shouted the fact to the foreman.

Tom's fate depended on what happened during the next few seconds.

If he passed beyond the reach of the log and his rescuers the chances were he would be drowned as soon as exhausted nature gave up the struggle.

"Now, boys, all together!" sang out the foreman, as he steadied the log with his gripper. "One more shove and it will hit the rock."

The men shoved, the huge log swung into place and the boy was saved.

But for Joe's aid he would have been drawn under the log and carried on down the stream.

The foreman saw that the rescued boy was like a wilted flower, so he sent one of the men out on the log to fetch him to the back.

Joe pulled himself backward, for he did not care to take the chances of standing up on a single log with the stream dashing over it like a mill race.

Tom was conscious, but that was the best that could be said for him.

Some whisky was poured down his throat and he was allowed to lie against a rock to recover.

The boom log was then released from its hold on the rock, and the current swung the end back to its former position against the bank.

Leaving Joe with Tom, the men returned to the boom above, and in a short time the logs up there were released, and they came rushing down like a big bunch of Marathon racers at the start.

"You had a narrow squeak of it, old man," said Joe. "I hope it will be a lesson to you not to try log crossing again."

Tom made no reply.

He felt too weak to indulge in conversation at that moment.

Joe fed him another drink of whisky, and that put a little life into him.

"I thought it was all over with me," he said at length. "At first I thought I could easily fetch the bank, for I can swim some, but the current was so strong that it seemed to hold me in a grip so tight that I could make no headway against it. So I had to give up and go along with it."

In a little while he was able to accompany Joe back to where the mules were munching the grass.

When Tom learned that it was five o'clock he said he'd get a calling down from the cook when he got back for being away when wanted.

"However, when he learns what I've been through I guess it will be all right," he added, "for we are good friends."

"The foreman of the chopping gang will go for my scalp because I've not hauled a log for nearly an hour," said Joe; "but when I have explained the particulars he will understand the reason of my absence."

So Tom started for the camp and Joe chased his mules back to the clearing.

Tom's narrow escape was reported to the superintendent, and the boy got a calling down for venturing out on the logs.

"Had you lost your life and the matter was followed up by your parents, the company could have been held responsible, legally, and compelled to pay damages," he said to Tom. "So after this I want to hear of no more skylarking from you. Do you understand?"

Tom said he did, and that ended the matter.

Joe was coming in to dinner with the gang one day when the covered wagon drew up before the office and a well-dressed man got out.

He proved to be the general manager of the company, the main office of which was at Bingham.

The Somerset Lumber Co. owned about half of the saw mills at that town, and was the most important of all the lumber companies in that county.

The manager had come to the camp to see how things were running there, though the superintendent kept him pretty well informed through his weekly report.

He also had an important piece of business on hand, which was to acquire for the company a fresh tract of timber land in the neighborhood, running along the river further to the north.

The company had been after it for some time, but the old man who owned it, and who lived on it alone, in hermit fashion, had steadfastly refused to sell, though offered a very fair price for it.

The company was eager to get it, as the land they had was being rapidly denuded of its timber, and in a year or two, as the choppers got further and further from the river, the cost of getting the logs to the stream would become a serious item.

Extra boys and mules would have to be hired to achieve the same results now accomplished by one boy and one string of animals.

The old man's property was most advantageously situated for the lumber trade, for it was a long and narrow strip right on the river, and it adjoined the company's water front.

The old man's objections to selling was not because he was holding out for more money, or a natural increase in the value of his tract, but because he did not want to give up his home in the woods, to which he had become attached, he said.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HERMIT OF THE WOODS.

Joe grabbed Tom by the arm and hauled him up on the log.

His friend was completely exhausted, and wasn't able to help himself even a little bit.

He asserted that money was no object to him, for he had little use for it.

All he wanted was to be left alone during the few remaining years of his life.

He declined to say whether he had relatives living to whom the property would revert in the event of his death.

In fact, no information of any kind could be got out of him.

The county records showed that he had owned the property for over twenty years, and that he paid the State tax, the only one he was up against, regularly.

On the other side of the river for several miles up and down there was no timber growing closer than within six miles of the stream, and the lumber company had no use for the land, so every few months somebody in its interest visited the old hermit to see if he couldn't be induced to sell his tract.

The old man, whose name was Hubbard, visited Bingham three or four times a year for supplies, going and coming in a dilapidated old sailboat.

As he was entitled to right of way, the loggers always had to get his boat over the booms, which was no great difficulty.

He had not passed either up or down since Joe and Tom had been at the camp.

As a matter of fact, he had not been seen in six months, and the general manager of the company, having been advised that Hubbard was a month or two behind his regular time for visiting the town, began to suspect that he might be dead.

He had come to the camp partly to investigate the matter.

The men had an hour for dinner, independent of the time it took them to come from and return to the chopping ground.

This gave them at least an hour to lounge around and smoke, for smoking was prohibited in the woods, owing to the prevalence of the dried brush, which during the summer was like tinder, and was liable to catch from a lighted match dropped into it.

A fire started under such circumstances might lead to very disastrous results.

When Joe came out of the dining-room that day he took a shady seat which happened to be under the open window of the superintendent's private office.

Inside the room the superintendent and the general manager were conversing.

Their talk related to the coveted tract of land owned by Hubbard.

Joe heard every word, and learned that the company was willing to give any price in reason for it.

The manager said that he intended visiting the old man on the following morning, and he expected the superintendent to accompany him.

He was afraid they would find Hubbard dead.

His death would throw the property into the hands of the probate court, and not only keep the company from purchasing it for some time, but would bring it in competition with other companies when it was eventually put up for sale.

The manager hoped this condition of things would not transpire.

Joe's curiosity was greatly excited concerning Hubbard, the hermit, and he wondered why the old man did not accept a good price for his property and remove to the pale of civilization where he could pass his last few years in comfort.

He returned to work with his gang and forgot about the hermit.

For some reason a couple of his mules were skittish that afternoon.

This was the first time he had noticed them behave that way. During the transit of the second log to the river they gave him considerable trouble and delayed his trip.

However, he got the log to the river, and was telling the foreman there about the unusual conduct of the two animals when the mules in question suddenly made a break up the river.

As he needed their services, he couldn't afford to let them get away, so mounting one of the other mules, he started after them.

They led him a pretty dance, however, but he kept them in sight, for they held close to the clear ground along the river.

After following them all of three miles, he began to close in on them.

Confident of capturing them, he spurred his mount forward.

He was almost up to the fugitives, when they suddenly dashed off into the woods.

He followed in no little disgust, but they left him behind, and finally he lost them altogether.

"I'm afraid I'll have to let them go, but I'll get a raking over for losing them," he said, for he was responsible for the animals. "This will throw me back in my work, and I wouldn't

be surprised if I was compelled to work next Sunday to clean up the logs that are piling up on me. Hello, here's a very respectable looking shanty in a clearing that seems to be planted in vegetables. I wonder who lives here?"

As he was hot and thirsty, he decided to stop and ask for a drink.

He dismounted, tied his mule, lest it should take a notion to make a break for freedom on its own account, and knocked on the half-open door.

Something like a groan came from within.

Joe repeated his knock, and another groan answered him.

He pushed open the door and entered.

He found himself in a tidy-looking room furnished with a table, several chairs, a stove, a dresser, on which was an array of dishes, a book-case full of books, a shelf on which stood a clock that was not going, and many other things.

Pots and pans were hung around near the stove, and several pictures adorned the rough log walls.

Again he heard the groan, now quite plain, and it came from an adjoining room, the door of which stood wide open.

Walking over, he looked in.

The sunshine coming through an open window fell upon a cot, and upon the cot lay stretched a white-haired old man.

Instantly the thought struck him that the figure was Hubbard, the hermit, the subject of the conversation between the manager and the superintendent.

"Hello," said Joe, "what's the matter? Are you sick?"

"Yes," said the old man, in a hollow tone.

"That's too bad. You appear to be all alone. What can I do for you?"

"In the name of heaven get me a drink of cool water."

"I'll do it if I can find the water."

"There is a spring at the back of the house," said the old fellow, with some difficulty. "Take a pitcher and fill it."

Joe found a pitcher on the dresser and, going to the rear of the premises, saw a spring bubbling up there.

He filled the pitcher and hurried back to the old man.

Filling a glass, he held it to the man's eager lips.

He drained every drop and fell back with a sigh of satisfaction and relief.

While the sick man lay still with his eyes closed, Joe took a drink himself.

"I would like to ask you a question," said Joe, when the old man opened his eyes and gazed at him steadfastly.

"Ask it."

"Is your name Hubbard?"

"Yes," nodded the sick man.

That was enough for Joe—he was face to face with the hermit of the woods.

CHAPTER X.

JOE'S FIND.

"How long have you been ill?" asked Joe.

"I have not been feeling very well for nearly three months—not well enough to make my regular trip to town; but I've only been real sick for two days. I gave out all at once, and had to take to my bed, as you see. I am now helpless to do anything for myself, and I looked for nothing but a speedy death. Your unexpected coming has been a blessing to me, for I was parched for a drink. I would have given every dollar this land of mine is worth for that drink of cool water. My gratitude to you is boundless. What fortunate chance brought you to my house? It is seldom I see the face of my fellow-man in this wilderness."

Joe told him how his chase of the two mules, which he had failed to capture, led him there.

"Then you are in the employ of the Somerset Lumber Co.?"

"Yes."

"Is this your first season with the company?"

"It is."

"What is your name, and how came you to take service with the loggers?"

Joe told how he and his friend Tom had run away from the Rockdale Institute, and had been carried to Bingham in a freight car, and that being in financial straits, they had agreed to work for the lumber company that season.

"I suppose you want to get back to your work as soon as you can?" said the old man.

"I ought to, but I won't leave you in this shape without doing what I can to help you and make you as comfortable as possible," said Joe.

"Thank you, boy. I believe you have a sympathetic heart. I wish you would bring my medicine chest from the corner. I have a fever and I want to take something that will reduce it."

Joe brought the chest.

He opened it and saw it was a specially prepared homeopathic case for self-doctoring.

There was a book of instructions which gave the symptoms of various ailments and diseases, and the medicine to take to afford relief and a cure.

Joe asked the old man to describe his symptoms, for he believed that the fever was one of the symptoms of his trouble, and not simply a fever alone.

As the fever had to be allayed, he selected the medicine applicable to fever, and gave him six pellets, which was the right dose.

"You must take these pellets every hour till you feel better.

Joe felt of his pulse and saw it was high.

There was a small white implement used for taking a sick person's temperature, and the old man directed him to place one end of the tube in his mouth and see what it registered at the end of a minute.

When Joe told him, the hermit pointed out another medicine in liquid form.

"Get a clean glass, fill it about half full of water, and then with one of those droppers put six drops of the medicine in it," he said.

The boy followed his directions.

He then asked the old man if he had any tea in the place, and if he had, should he prepare him some.

The hermit said he had tea, and would like a cup.

He told Joe where to find it, and he went out into the next room, built a fire, boiled the water and made the tea.

He found some soda crackers and brought them to the old man with the tea.

"How do you feel now, Mr. Hubbard?" asked Joe.

"A little better—thanks to what you have done for me."

"I don't think you ought to be left alone. You need attention. When you get well you ought to sell your property and go to town where you can get a doctor whenever you need one."

"No," said the hermit, "I shall live and die in the wilderness. I have experienced nothing but ingratitude from the world, and I want nothing to do with it. I will make an exception in your case. You have done me a great kindness and I appreciate it. You shall not regret it."

"The Somerset Lumber Co. is very anxious to secure your property. I heard the manager, who came to camp to-day, tell the superintendent so. It is most advantageously situated close to the river, and the company doesn't want any other company to get hold of it. The manager and the superintendent are going to pay you a visit in the morning."

"I don't want to see them. I won't talk to them. I am too ill to talk, anyway. Besides, I won't sell."

"They are afraid if you should die the property would be thrown into court while a search was made for your heirs."

"I haven't any heirs. I haven't anybody in the world."

"Then your property would go to the State, I suppose, and the lumber company would buy it from the authorities, but in that case there would be competition for it, which they wish to avoid by getting it from you before you die."

"The State sha'n't have it, for the money would go to the politicians."

"Then you will have to will it to somebody, or sell it."

"I will. I'll sell it to you for \$1 on condition that you will not claim it till I am dead, and that you will visit me once a week as long as you remain at the camp."

Joe's heart gave a big jump at the prospect of getting hold of such a valuable property.

But there was a difficulty in the way.

Being under age, he could not legally take title to real estate.

He mentioned the fact to the old man.

"I will fix that. You say you have an uncle?"

"Yes."

Is he your legal guardian?"

"Yes."

"Have you full confidence in him?"

"Oh, yes. He's all right."

"Then the first time I am able to go to town I will transfer the property to him in trust for you, inserting a clause to the effect that I am to retain possession of the property as long as I live. After I am dead you can sell the property to the lumber company that will give the highest price for it, or you can form a lumber company of your own to take the property over. You will have no trouble in securing the necessary capital," said the hermit.

"It is very good of you to give me this valuable tract when you can sell it for big money."

"What good is the money to me? I would have to mingle with the world to spend it, which I never will do. I am perfectly contented here in this solitude. I will not make a change now that I am drawing near my end."

"Well, is there anything more I can do for you before I go? I will ride up here after supper and see how you are getting on, and, if necessary, remain with you all night."

"You are very good, boy. I believe you are deserving of my liberality. There is nothing more you can do now. I shall be glad to have you come back this evening and remain a while. I may need your services."

Joe then bade him good-by and left the house.

To his surprise he found the two fugitive mules outside eating the vegetable sprouts in the truck patch.

He approached them cautiously, but they made no attempt to get away.

Securing them, he took them back to the chopping ground, where, as he expected, the foreman went for his scalp.

He explained why he had been so long away, though he did not mention that he had spent an hour at the old hermit's house, but the foreman said he had no business to let the mules get away from him.

He was later reported to the superintendent, but nothing came of it.

After supper that evening he started for the hermit's place on foot.

He had intended to ride, but he couldn't take a mule without attracting attention, and he did not care to let anybody at the camp know where he was going.

He followed the river bank to the point where he believed he had entered the woods after the mules that afternoon.

It happened it was not the same place.

It was very difficult, particularly at night, though the stars were out and it was not so very dark to recognize a particular spot or opening into the woods, which one has seen but once before, though it is true Joe had made a note of the place when he started back so he would know it again.

At any rate, he was deceived by another opening not quite so far up the river.

He entered the woods at that point, and had not gone far when he stepped into a hole concealed by brush, and shot down to the bottom of it a depth of seven or eight feet.

He felt around and found that the hole was not very wide, but it was as dark as pitch.

Fortunately, he had some matches in his pocket, and he struck one.

Right above him was the hollow roots of an old dead tree.

The roots stretched down into the earth around him.

The hole through which he had slid lay between two gnarled and massive roots.

The singular part of the business was a rope hanging down through the hollow of the tree, to the end of which was attached a large tin box, japanned, with a gilt stripe around the edge of the cover.

The box was tarnished and rusty, and looked as if it had been hanging there a considerable time.

Joe lifted it and found it fairly heavy.

"I wonder what is in it, and how it comes to be in such a place as this?" the boy asked himself.

A small key, that evidently belonged to the box, was tied to the handle with a bit of string.

"I must get out of here first of all and then get the box out. I wouldn't be surprised if it contained something valuable," thought Joe.

After taking a careful survey of the hole, Joe decided where he would crawl out.

It proved a more difficult job than it looked, but he finally managed to extricate himself.

Then he carefully examined the trunk of the tree for the opening he expected to find in it.

Although he knew the trunk was hollow, it looked perfectly solid.

"The opening must be above, in the crotch where the dead limbs branch out," he thought.

He crawled up to that point, struck another match and saw that was where the hole was.

The rope was not visible, and Joe wondered where it was attached.

Flashing a light down into the hollow trunk, he saw that several large nails had been driven into the inside bark close together so that their combined strength would hold the weight of the box.

Reaching down, he seized the rope and drew the box up.

Cutting the rope off close to the nails, he lowered the box to the ground on the outside.

Then he slid down himself.

Cutting the key loose, he tried to insert it into the lock, but both it and the keyhole were rusty, and the key wouldn't go in.

"The key and the lock will have to be cleaned out and oiled," he said, "and then, I guess, they will work all right. I'll carry the box to the old man's cottage."

It took Joe nearly an hour to find the clearing where the cottage was.

When he walked in the hermit was asleep.

He lighted a lamp he saw on the dresser, and he proceeded to put in his time on the box.

He found some sweet oil and a piece of rag and got busy with the key first.

He scraped the rust off as well as he could with his knife, then cleaned it till it shone with the oil and the cloth.

Then he applied himself to the keyhole of the box.

This was a longer and more difficult job.

An hour passed and at last Joe got the key to work.

It turned in the lock with a loud snap that awoke the old hermit.

At the same moment Joe pried up the cover with the blade of his knife, and found that the box was full of money, part of it in double golden eagles.

"Gee! this is a great find!" he ejaculated, excitedly.

CHAPTER XI.

A SMALL FORTUNE.

At that juncture he heard the old man call out: "Who's there?"

"I'm here," replied Joe, closing the box and, taking the lamp, went into the next room with the box under his arm.

Hubbard looked at the box, which he believed contained something the boy had brought for him from the logging camp, and then said:

"How long have you been here?"

"Maybe an hour," replied Joe, putting the box on the floor. "I found you asleep when I came in, and would not disturb you. How do you feel?"

"Pretty good. The sleep helped me. I don't feel so feverish as I did, and my brain feels clearer."

Joe felt of his forehead and saw that it felt kind of moist, and not dry and hot as it was before.

"You're better," he said. "I judge so by the feel of your head."

"Did you have any trouble when you got back to work this afternoon?"

"I got a rousing call-down from the foreman."

"You told him that you accidentally came across this house and found me ill, and that you stopped to help me."

"No, I didn't mention you at all. I laid all the blame of my absence on the runaway mules. They deserved it. It didn't do me much good, though, for the foreman told me that I had no business to let them get away."

"Then I suppose you said nothing about me at the camp?"

"Nothing at all. I intended to come back and I did not want anybody to guess where I was bound."

"What have you in that box?"

"You'd never guess."

"Some food you have brought me from the camp?"

"No. I brought you nothing from the camp. I figured you had all you needed for the present in the house."

"I guess I have, though my stock of groceries have run out."

"I missed my route in returning here. I came on foot, for I couldn't take a mule."

"That was something of a walk."

"Not over three miles, and I don't mind that. I met with an adventure soon after taking to the woods."

"An adventure?"

"Yes. I fell into a hole under an old decayed and hollow tree."

"You didn't hurt yourself?"

"No. I found this box in the hole."

"Did you? Rather a singular place for it to be."

"It wasn't put into the hole the way I got there. The chances are the hole was there when the box was hidden. I found it attached to the end of a rope which ran up through the hollow trunk of the tree. After I got out of the hole I climbed the tree to the crotch and pulled the box out, for I judged that it contained something of value or it wouldn't have been hidden where I found it."

"Have you examined it?"

"Yes. The key was tied to the handle. While you slept I

cleaned the key and the lock and had just opened the box when you woke up and called out to me."

"What is in the box?"

"Money, and a lot of it, in gold and paper."

The old hermit looked around astonished.

"Money!" he said, incredulously.

"Yes. Look. I'll show you."

Joe lifted the cover and held the lamp so the light would shine into the box.

"My gracious!" said Hubbard. "It is money. How much?"

"I haven't counted it yet."

"You can do so now."

Joe had no objection, for it was a pleasant job, as he was curious to find out how much he had found.

There proved to be \$5,000 in gold and \$15,000 in bills.

Nothing else was in the box except an old newspaper, bearing a date of twenty years before.

The newspaper was called the Portland Press, and a part of it was missing.

It had been used to pad the box with.

"You are rich, young man," said the old hermit, "and you will be still richer when you come in control of this property after I have passed away. Truly your lucky star guided you to this part of the State."

"Those mules deserve some credit. I wouldn't have come out to these woods but for them. They probably saved your life as well as helped me to a small fortune. We have both reason to be grateful to them."

"I suppose you will give up the logging camp now and go back to your home?" said the hermit, regretfully, as he thought of losing the boy's society just when he was congratulating himself on having made his acquaintance.

"I haven't considered what I will do now that I have a bunch of money. I wouldn't like to leave you abruptly—certainly I wouldn't do it until you are well once more. It wouldn't be treating you right when you have promised to turn over this property of yours to me. I intended visiting you as often as you cared to see me, and also introduce my friend Tom to you, if you cared to know him. I dare say this money will keep until the logging season is finished. Three months more will finish it up. In the meantime, I will leave the money in your care."

"You feel you can trust me with so much?" said the old man.

"Why not? You couldn't spend it around here."

"I might run off with it when I got well."

"If you won't turn your own property into money, I guess the contents of this box will be no great temptation to you."

"You are right, my boy. I have no use for any more money than it takes to purchase things that I actually need. I am happy here with my books and my solitude. What more do I need?"

"Your way of accumulating happiness wouldn't suit me, nor most people, but if it pleases you I don't know that you could better yourself by making a change. I have heard my uncle say that real happiness does not exist in this world except in spots in one's life. He said contentment, if acquired, was the nearest approach to it. You appear to be contented in this lonesome place. If that is a fact, you could not be happier under different conditions. I have read about hermits, but you are the first I have ever met. You must have had some powerful reason for separating yourself from civilization in the first place before you knew that you would be contented out in these wilds."

"I had. A very strong reason. It is my secret, and it will die with me," said the old man, in an impressive tone.

"Do you want me to remain with you to-night?" said Joe.

"No. You can get me another pitcher of spring water, and leave a few crackers within my reach. Also the lamp turned low. Lock your box and take the key away with you. Shove it under my cot for to-night. I guess it will be safe there. Still there is always a chance that some unscrupulous person might intrude upon me and, finding me helpless to resist him, rob me. At the back of the house, behind the spring, you will find a hole that runs under the flooring. Shove the box in there. Get a bunch of brush and cover the hole, and it will be safe, I guess."

Joe followed the hermit's instructions, brought him fresh water and the box of soda crackers, and then wishing him good-night, started for the camp.

It was going on midnight, the camp was quiet and everybody was asleep when he got there.

He had no difficulty in reaching his bed, for the door opening on the stairs was locked.

In a short time he was sound asleep himself.

No one but Tom asked him where he was the preceding evening.

He had not been missed particularly.

He informed his friend that he would tell him later.

At half-past seven he started with the gang to work.

About nine o'clock the superintendent and the manager, on their way to visit the hermit, stopped at the chopping ground a while.

They found the old recluse in bed, but feeling pretty well for a sick man.

The manager asked him how long he had been ill, and learned why he had not paid his usual visit to Bingham.

He used the old man's illness as a strong argument to get him to sell his property, but Hubbard told him he never intended to sell it.

"You mean to leave it to some relative, I suppose," said the manager.

"I have none. When I die this property will go to a boy who did me a great favor."

The manager tried to obtain the name and address of the fortunate boy, but the hermit refused to give it.

"You will learn when it comes to him," was all he would say.

The interview was decidedly unsatisfactory to the lumber man, for the property seemed to be further off than ever from the company.

Finally he and the superintendent went away, and that afternoon he took the wagon back to town.

That evening Joe paid another visit to old Hubbard to see how he was coming on.

He found him much better and able to get up for a little while.

"What have you had to eat to-day?" asked the boy.

"Nothing but crackers," said the hermit.

"I'll make you some tea and toast. I've fetched half a loaf of fresh bread from the camp, and some butter," said Joe.

"You have made me feel hungry," said Hubbard.

Joe made the tea and toast, and the old man finished both, after which he said he felt better than ever.

"I'll be able to get about a little to-morrow and can look after myself," he said.

"As to-morrow is Saturday, I won't come again till Sunday morning," said Joe.

"Very well," said the hermit.

After remaining about an hour, Joe went back to the camp.

He found Tom waiting for him to turn up.

"Now tell me where you have been off to these two nights," said his friend.

Joe told him how he had accidentally made the acquaintance of the hermit, and what he had done for the old man.

He did not tell Tom about the tin box full of money he had found, nor about the promise given by Hubbard with reference to his property.

And so Tom remained in ignorance of his comrade's good fortune.

CHAPTER XII.

FIGURING ON A SPECULATION IN SHINGLES.

The wagon came into camp next morning, and, as usual, the driver brought a bunch of letters for the men and a bundle of newspapers.

The papers were put on sale at the store and Joe got one of them.

He retired to a shady spot to read it.

The lumber trade was always an important subject with the papers of the State, and Joe read that owing to the fact that there had been a large demand for lumber that summer, the market was short and the price was rising.

The lumber companies were taking advantage of the fact, as a matter of course.

The paper hinted that shingles and other lumber products would soon follow suit, but at present the demand for the former was not equal to the supply.

The article went on to say that owing to the heavy expense the lumber companies were under, and the slow collections that year, they could not afford to restrict their output, which had they been able to do would have resulted in still higher prices.

The newspaper story made considerable impression on Joe.

It struck him what a fine chance a few men with money or good credit had to create a partial corner in the lumber trade.

Later, he broached the subject to one of the clerks.

That young man agreed that a person with a big bunch of cash could make a good thing of it, if trade conditions held,

by coming to Bingham and contracting for all the lumber and shingles turned out by the mills for a month and holding the stuff back until the price jumped, as it was bound to do, for a very large part of the visible supply in the State came from that town.

"Could a speculator really do that?" asked Joe. "I thought all the lumber was shipped under agreement with the big lumber dealers in the cities."

"It is. The big lumber companies take the output in large shipments on six months' time, and sell to smaller dealers on three and four months' time. The smaller dealers sell to the builders on one, two, three and four months' time, according as those people can raise the funds to pay. A man who pays in thirty days is considered a cash buyer and gets the bed rock price on all he buys. The man who can't pay under sixty days has to pay a little higher price for his lumber. So with the contracting builders who are compelled to ask for ninety or 120 days—the longer time the more his lumber costs him. So it is with shingles and everything else in the lumber line. You understand?"

"Yes," said Joe.

"As the lumber companies have to wait six months on the average for their cash returns, which involves the larger part of their shipments for a season, they necessarily have to have a good capital to conduct their business. Even at that they are constantly having their notes discounted at their local banks in order to raise money to pay their running expenses. This discount accommodation is a source of great profit to the two banks at Bingham. It represents the main part of their business. Take the lumber business away from the town, and one bank would be amply sufficient to do all the business that would be left. Well, now that you understand the situation, you can see how a capitalist could walk into Bingham and be received with open arms if he said he wanted to buy so many million feet of lumber, or a half million bundles of shingles for spot cash on delivery. He could make a contract at the very lowest wholesale price, for money down talks every time. The companies need it, and are willing to make concessions to get it," said the clerk.

"Why isn't that done, then? Syndicates are formed to buy cargoes of coffee and such things, why not lumber? A dozen millionaires could corner the lumber trade of this State. I should think," said Joe.

"They could, certainly, but as such a gigantic enterprise would, for a certain time, paralyze the building business, it would lead to a public investigation, and the combine would find itself in hot water, and have to loosen up."

"I see," said Joe.

"But what a big syndicate could not do on a large scale a small speculator could engage in on a limited basis, because his scheme would have no such effect on the building industry as a whole. For instance, a man could come to Bingham and contract for 500,000 bundles of shingles if he knew that shingles were short in the market, dependent on Bingham for its supply. He could buy on a cash basis of thirty days, and if he was known to be good for the money he would not be expected to pay for thirty days. If he were a stranger, or his credit was not vouched for, if he had say \$15,000 or \$20,000, he could put up as evidence of good faith, his contract would go all right. His order would be filled as fast as possible, and while it was being turned out all ordinary shipments of shingles would necessarily have to cease. If there was a run on the shingle market the price would go up and the contractor would be in a position to ship his shingles at a profitable advance on the old price, or he could hold them back for a still higher figure if he thought he could get it. In the latter case he would be taking a considerable risk, for the moment his order was filled, shipments would begin again, and the famine would be broken. All speculators, however, have to run risks—the word speculation implies it. The man who can see ahead correctly, or is running in luck, is the chap who wins the oftenest."

Joe, when he went to dinner, felt that he had learned something new, and he wondered if he hadn't found a way to employ his \$20,000 capital.

As soon as Tom was at liberty, he and Joe started for the hermit's house.

Tom was curious to see the old man who owned a valuable tract of timber land, and preferred to live on it all alone by himself to selling it for a good price and enjoying all the comforts that money will purchase these days.

They found Hubbard up and around, though he was still weak on his pins.

He gave Joe a hearty welcome, and extended the same to his friend.

During their stay he said that he intended going to Bingham

on the following week if he felt able to make the round trip in comfort, for his groceries and other articles were practically all out, and he must purchase a fresh supply.

The only kind of meat he used was smoked ham, he said, as he lived chiefly on the vegetables he raised in his truck patch, of which he always had a plentiful supply, more, in fact, than he could consume.

The boys remained a couple of hours and then took their leave.

The wagon brought a bunch of newspapers on Wednesday when it arrived, and Joe bought one when he came in with the gang for dinner.

After the meal he went to a shady seat and read the news, particularly what was said about lumber conditions.

The wholesale prices were the same as those last noted, but the paper said that the price was certain to go higher within a week or two.

Shingles were not as yet affected, but the Bingham News said that several of the mills had stopped making them in order to rush out more lumber, for all the mills were behind in their lumber shipments, owing to the number of orders on their books.

This stoppage in the production of shingles was likely to affect the price if a shortage took place in the market, which seemed likely from all indications.

That evening Joe went out to see the old man.

He carried the paper with him for the hermit's benefit, and indirectly to use as an exhibit in the lumber matter.

He told the recluse about the conversation he had had with the clerk on the preceding Sunday morning.

"Now, Mr. Hubbard, I have been figuring on going into a speculation in shingles. That \$20,000 I found ought to put another \$5,000 in my pocket if I work the oracle right. Several of the mills, it is announced, have stopped making shingles to push the making of boards and such stuff. This cuts down the output of shingles at Bingham from a third to a half. Now if I go to Bingham with you, when you make the trip, and make a thirty-day contract with the other mills for all the shingles they can supply me, I will have a corner for that time on the shingle industry of the town, unless the other mills resume making them. I can put up the \$20,000 as security, say \$5,000 with each mill, and then watch the condition of the shingle market. At the end of two weeks there ought to be a rise, certainly at the end of three. Whether there is or not, I must then begin arrangements for disposing of my shingles. I will go on to Portland, Belfast and other centers and offer the shingles in carload lots to the big wholesalers at a shade under the market, and I guess I will have no great trouble in closing out all I have contracted for. If I need more money to see me through, as I may, I will call on my uncle and put the matter up to him, and I guess he'll help me out if he sees I stand to win. What do you think about it?" asked Joe, with sparkling eyes.

"I think it is a great risk for a young fellow like you to undertake," said the old man. "You might lose a considerable part of the \$20,000."

Joe, with boyish enthusiasm, didn't think he would lose anything, even if the scheme was not a financial success.

"If the price did not advance a cent I'd stand to make the difference between what I had contracted to pay for them and the wholesale market price."

"But your plan is to buy the shingles at the lowest cash price, which will mean that payment will be exacted in thirty days from the delivery of each lot. I suppose you understand that there are different grades of shingles which fetch different prices, the wholesale prices on which run from say \$3 to \$6.50 per thousand? Do you intend to restrict yourself to one grade, or several?"

"The shingles that sell around \$4 at present to builders are in the greatest demand. I should be able to deliver them in Portland for \$3.50 and make \$1 a thousand. Suppose the price of these shingles advances to \$5? I will make \$2."

"I know, if your plans go through all right. You could buy about 30,000 bundles with your money, or say 120,000 shingles. It seems to me that wouldn't count a whole lot in the market."

"I expect to buy twice that amount."

"How can you when you propose to pay cash to the mills?"

"Cash is thirty days. I will have thirty days in which to sell half of them, and get the balance of the money to make good."

"That is all right on paper, but you would have to sell for cash to get your money in, and if your collections were slow you'd be in a hole. Besides, how are you going to find enough cash customers? Everybody in the building line buys on time—particularly the large dealers you would expect to sell to, and the larger the dealer the longer the time. Now the only

way you can put your speculation through successfully is to be on the safe side yourself. You are in a position to take a fair risk. You have \$20,000 which you can invest in anything, and which you can sell on time yourself without having to worry whether your money returns to you in thirty days or 120, as long as you deal with responsible firms. The money will enable you to buy your stock at the lowest rock bottom figures, below the figure that the mills sell the same stuff to the big wholesalers on four or six months' time. Say that you buy 30,000 bundles of shingles and pay for them, you will own them out and out. Then you can go around among the smaller dealers and sell them in lots to suit at a shade below the wholesale price the big dealers charge. That will give you a sort of double profit. If the price should go up you will make so much more. If it should go down you will probably have a margin of profit in sight. So you can win out anyway. Since you are determined to go into the speculation, that's the way I would advise you to tackle it," said the old man.

"That is my idea exactly, though I intended to take a risk in order to make twice as much. I see now that I probably would not be able to sell the shingles in a way that would return me the second half of the money I should need in time to pay up for a double quantity," said Joe.

"I admire your enterprise, but as you are only a boy and not an experienced speculator, it would be the part of prudence not to take any more risk than you can help with your first venture. It would be better to content yourself with less profit in order to insure success."

Joe agreed with him and made his plans accordingly.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WINNING SPECULATION.

Joe knew he could not very well get a leave of absence from the camp to carry out his plans, so he determined to take French leave.

He would sacrifice half of what he had earned so far, but that amounted to very little in comparison with what he expected to make out of his contemplated speculation.

Besides, being worth \$20,000, he had no further use for the \$4 a week and board that looked pretty good when he was on his uppers.

He guessed Tom wouldn't object to quitting the camp on the same terms, either, for though he was getting on pretty well now, having got used to his work, he was not in love with the loggers' camp.

Joe thought he could use his friend as his assistant in the enterprise, though he could not say yet in what way Tom would be of use to him.

However, he would be company for him if nothing else, and he could afford to pay his expenses for the pleasure of his companionship.

At any rate, Tom wouldn't care to remain at the camp after he had gone.

On the following evening he and Tom walked out of the camp together into the woods, and then Joe laid his plans before him, after telling Tom about the money he had found.

"Gee! You're a lucky fellow," said Tom. "Why, \$20,000 is a fortune. If I had that much I wouldn't do anything but enjoy myself for the next few years."

"That would be foolish. You'd fritter your capital away instead of putting it to profitable use, as I propose doing. I expect to clean up several thousand dollars in my shingle speculation, and then go into some other money-making enterprise. Now that I have a bunch of money, I think there is little chance of my going into my uncle's bank. I prefer to be my own boss and do business my own way," said Joe.

"So you're going to quit the camp right away?" said Tom.

"I am. Are you coming with me?"

"I'd like to, but you know I haven't any money. Neither of us can collect our half pay before the end of the season, when everybody is paid off. That doesn't make any difference to you, for you are rolling in cash, but it makes a difference to me."

"Don't let that worry you. I'll see you through, and if I can find something for you to do in connection with my speculation, I'll give you a fair salary."

"All right. I'm with you. I don't want to stay here after you are gone."

"I thought you wouldn't care to. Well, let's walk out to the hermit's and see when he's going to start for Bingham."

"There'll be a squeal from the bosses when we start to leave."

"We will not tell them about it. I've arranged with Hub-

bard to meet his boat after it has passed the lower boom. Then our departure will not be noticed."

"That's a good plan; but how are we going to get our grips out of the sleeping room?"

"That will be easy. We'll take them out when everybody is asleep and hide them in the woods. Now as the old man hasn't got much in the eating line aside from vegetables, you must get away with two or three loaves of bread, some butter, and anything else handy. You can stow the bread in your grip and make a package of the rest."

They reached the house in the woods and found Hubbard reading a favorite book.

Arrangements were made to leave on the following Thursday.

Hubbard said they had better start late at night.

At midnight Thursday the boys, who had been lying awake in their bunks, arose, dressed, and taking their grips in their hands, stole downstairs and outside.

They went to the storeroom behind the kitchen, where the food in immediate use was kept in an ice-chest and on shelves, and Tom opened the window which he had left unfastened on purpose.

Joe boosted his friend in through the window, and waited for him to get what he was after.

He passed out two moderate sized loaves of bread and then a small package.

They then started for a point a hundred yards above the upper boom.

Here they found the old man waiting for them in his sailboat, which had a small cabin like a catboat.

No time was wasted getting under way.

The boat was worked over the boom and was carried rapidly down to the second, and thence to the third, which was the last until they reached the booms of another lumber company.

Here they found the booms full of logs and had to drag the boat across them.

However, they passed all obstructions before morning, and soon after sunrise reached the Kennebec, which was navigable at that point for boats of light draught.

The brief trip down the river was performed without adventure, and they duly reached Bingham.

Joe took his box of money to a local bank and left it there on temporary deposit.

He then bought a paper and studied up the lumber market with particular reference to shingles.

The price had been slightly advanced to the builders, but was no higher otherwise.

The boys recovered their clothes from the pawnshop, paying the interest, and a small extra charge for care.

Next day Joe got down to business.

He called at a mill that was making shingles and contracted for 6,000 bundles, on a cash basis, delivery within thirty days.

He got the bed rock price.

He went to each of the other four mills and made a similar contract.

The other mills in town had stopped making shingles, filling orders from their reserve stock.

Joe found that the five mills had almost enough shingles on hand to fill his orders, and this fact made a difference in his calculations.

He called on the hermit and told him how things were.

"I find that it will not be possible for me to corner the shingle industry in this place for even an hour. The best I can do will be to clean out the reserve stock of the five mills. I can't touch the reserve of the other seven mills, but I have found out that it is low now, and that they will soon run out unless they start in right away to make more. I would need at least \$50,000 to tie up shingles for a week or two."

The old man pondered.

"I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll borrow \$20,000 on my note at one of the banks where I am known, on the security of my land. That will give you a better hold on the shingle business. Contract for a second lot, but buy them on ninety days' time. That will give you some hold, though not exactly a corner on the business. Understand?"

"I do," said Joe.

Next day the old man said he had the money on deposit.

He went around with Joe and guaranteed payment on 70,000 bundles of shingles on ninety days' time.

That gave Joe the call on 100,000 bundles of shingles, 25,000 of which were ready for delivery, and it would take the five mills a week or more to complete the order.

The only free shingles now obtainable in Bingham were those in stock at the other seven mills, which did not total up 15,000 bundles.

Joe then called on the freight agent to arrange for cars, and found he would have no trouble in getting all he wanted.

Two days afterward there was another rise in the price of the grade of shingles Joe had bought, but Joe's speculation had no connection with it.

It was too small a deal to affect the market in general, though it was bound to affect the local markets dependent on Bingham for their supply.

But it happened that lumber conditions in general throughout New England at that time favored a rise in all kinds of lumber.

The hermit usually only spent two or three days in Bingham, and then returned to the wilderness, but on this occasion he appeared to be in no hurry to go back.

One morning he brought Joe a document he had executed.

It transferred all his right and title in the property he owned to Joe's uncle in trust for himself.

Joe took the paper, thanked him, and said no use would be made of it as long as he, Hubbard, lived, unless with his consent.

Orders for a large quantity of shingles was sent in to the mills at this time, for immediate delivery, but the mills could not fill the orders right away.

They were tied up by Joe's big order.

The price of shingles in all the small places between Bingham and Portland were considerably affected by the conditions at Bingham, and the price jumped up \$1.

Joe then began to arrange for selling his accumulating stock.

He sent Tom in one direction while he went in another, and offered shingles at a certain reduction from the market rate.

They dealt only with small concerns who were good, and by the time the mills had finished his order, old Hubbard, who was acting as his agent in Bingham, was shipping the shingles in carload lots daily.

In this way Joe got rid of 50,000 bundles.

He still had another 50,000 to sell, and he went to Portland, Belfast and other large places and offered his shingles at a discount below what the big wholesaler, who stood by the market, wanted.

He found no difficulty in finding customers on a sixty-day basis.

Six weeks from the time he started his speculation he had sold his last carload of shingles, and had realized a profit of 25 cents on each bundle, after deducting storage charges at Bingham, freight charges, which he stood for, and other expenses connected with the speculation, which included wages to Tom, his traveling expenses and many other items.

During all this time old Hubbard remained at Bingham, and back there Joe and Tom went.

The sixty-day time clause in the sales would enable him to settle with the mills on the ninety-day purchase of the 70,000 bundles, and release the \$20,000 of the old man's money.

He would then get back his own investment of \$20,000 and a profit of \$25,000 more.

When everything had been cleaned up but the collections, the old man said he was going back to his house, but would come back in thirty days to get his money and pay his note held by the bank.

"Tom has written his folks and I have communicated with my uncle," said Joe. "I sent him that paper and I have his reply. Read it. You will see how amazed he is at my good fortune."

Tom received orders from his step-father to come home at once.

He reluctantly departed, saying he hoped to come back.

He didn't come, for he was sent back to the Rockdale Institute, where he told the boys the astonishing story of his and Joe's experiences from the moment they ran away from the school.

At the end of the thirty days Joe made his collections, settled with the old hermit, spent a week with him, and then started for Clearhaven to see his uncle.

As our story concerns only Joe's winning speculation, we cannot follow his career further.

He devoted his funds to other speculations, every one of which proved so successful that everybody who knew him called him a winning speculator.

Next week's issue will contain "A BOY'S BIG DEAL; OR, THE WALL STREET TIP THAT WON."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

The Paris police are investigating a remarkable pearl affair. An individual, whose name is undivulged, has discovered a means of hiding defects in pearls by a process of enameling. Many pearls prepared for the market have been seized by the police. One pearl valued at 80,000 francs by an expert is declared to have a real value of only 13,000 francs.

W. E. Puett, a farmer and fruit grower, living eight miles from Cassville, Mo., brought in several baskets of fuzzless peaches last month. The peaches are of the cling-stone variety and are exactly like an ordinary peach except that the skin is smooth, like that of an apple, and has deep-red color. Puett has three trees which produce these fuzzless peaches, and he says they were grown from the seed of the ordinary fuzzy-skinned Elberta.

The trunk of the elephant may justly be considered as one of the miracles of nature, being at once the organ of respiration, as well as the instrument by which the animal supplies itself with food. Nearly eight feet in length, endowed with exquisite sensibility, and stout in proportion to the massive size of the animal, this organ will uproot trees or gather grass, raise a piece of artillery or take up a nut, kill a man or brush off a fly.

A story is related in the London "Lancet" of an Afghan who actually swallowed all his movable property in the shape of fifty-nine Kabuli rupees, equal to about \$12 in American money, in order to avoid a taxgatherer. The details were given at length in the "Lancet," where the case is recorded because of the great surgical interest attaching to the removal of the coins from the man's stomach, an operation which was successfully performed in a hospital at Peshawar.

The great utility of suspension bridges is well understood by naturalists. Gould, the famous English naturalist, placed several colonies of ants in flower-pots, setting these in a large trough of water, so that the insects could not escape. After they had become accustomed to their new situation, he stretched threads from the flower-pots to the ground. In ten minutes all the ants had heard of the newly discovered bridges and were using them as means of transit.

The name "harmattan" has been given to a dry, hot wind which periodically blows from the interior of Africa toward the Atlantic during December, January and February. It is accompanied by a fog or dry haze, which sometimes conceals the sun for weeks together. Every plant, every bit of grass and leaf in its course, is withered as though it had been seared by heat from a furnace. Often within an hour after it begins to blow green grass is dry enough to burn.

The Kaiser has made a sketch to commemorate the loss of the naval Zeppelin, and the picture will be finished in colors by Professor Bohrat. It will form a companion picture to the Emperor's widely known cartoon, "The Yellow Peril." It shows a naval airship lighthouse on a rocky coast. On the left is the figure of Germania with the imperial insignia, a crown of bay, and the imperial shield. There is a shining cross in the sky and in the center the figure of Christ with a crown of thorns. Underneath the picture is written the text: "Greater love hath no man than this—that he lay down his life for his friends."

James Huffman and his wife were sitting in their home on a farm near Glasgow, Ky., a few nights ago, talking about their son, Virgil, and wondering if he would ever come home. Virgil had been away twenty years, seeking his fortune in Alaska. There was a knock at the door, and Huffman opened it, to see a dusty traveler, who said he was tired and was seeking lodging for the night. Huffman thought he could do nothing for him, as there were visitors in the home, and the traveler turned to go. But Mrs. Huffman could not see the man turned out into the night, so called him back. They led him into the hall, under the swinging lamp, and as the light fell on his face the aged couple recognized him. There was a glad reunion. Virgil Huffman had been prospecting in Alaska for a number of years, and he had prospered. Now he will make his home with his parents.

The water of the Great Salt Lake, in Utah, is so buoyant that a man may lie on his back in it and easily float, with his head and neck, his legs to the knee, and both arms to the elbow, entirely out of the water. On assuming a sitting position, with the arms extended, his shoulders will rise above the water. On account of the extreme buoyancy of the water, swimming is laborious, from the tendency of the lower extremities to rise above the surface. The lake is 75 miles long and 30 broad. The first to navigate its waters was General Fremont, in 1843. In saltiness the Utah lake is not to be compared with a Siberian lake in Obdorsk, which for a long time has been entirely roofed with a deposit of salt. It is 9 miles wide and 17 in length. Originally evaporation played the most prominent part in coating the lake over with salt, but at the present time the salt springs which surround it are adding fast to the thickness of the crust. In the long-ago period evaporation of the lake's waters left great salt crystals on the surface. In course of time these caked together. Thus the waters were finally entirely covered. In 1878 the lake found an underground outlet into the River Obi, which lowered its surface about three feet. The salt crust was so thick, however, that it retained its old level, and now presents the curious spectacle of a salt-roofed lake. The salt coat increases six inches in thickness every year. The many little islands with which the lake is studded are said to act as braces and to help keep the arched salt crust in position.

AN IRISH ROBINHOOD

OR,

THE HEROES OF THE BRIDGE

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER V (continued).

"Then they must be Dutch deserters or scouts of the—"

"Hist, and await me, while I take a peep in here," interrupted the giant, as he parted the tall rushes. "If you hear the cry of a bat, advance in my track."

Stealing through the rushes with all the caution of a fox, the big scout was soon peering in at the opening of the cave.

The three Danes were seated around a rude table, throwing dice for the spoils they had just secured, as well drinking liquor from a flask near them.

Fingal could see that the red-bearded rascals had their arms ready for instant use, as their guns were within reach, their huge axes were lying on the table, and their short-swords were sticking in their belts.

"Ugly customers," muttered the giant, as he glanced around the cave and listened to the foreign tongue. "What have they done with the pretty bird from the tree?"

The girl was not to be seen in the cave, as she was secured in a small alcove in a dark corner at the end.

While Fingal was meditating about attacking the three ruffians single-handed, Otto reached out his hand as if to grasp the flask, when he suddenly seized the large ax and let it fly at the opening with great force and precision, springing up at the same moment, and crying:

"Some prowling hound is on us! Look to the damsel, and bear her out the other way, while I guard the passage."

The giant saw the movement with the ax in time to withdraw his head and escape the blow, and he then uttered a deathly groan as if gasping in agony.

Otto heard that groan, and he sprang to the opening of the cave, sword in hand, crying:

"The blow was well aimed, and the prowler is slain. Out with the torch, and seize your arms, brothers."

Fingal was on the point of springing in to attack the rascals, when he conceived the idea of putting forth a little strategy, whereby he might secure a bloodless victory, and without aid from the others.

Keeping perfectly quiet in the long rushes outside the cave, and stretching himself at full length with his face down, the giant pretended to be sleeping the sleep of death, while he kept half an eye fixed on the opening to the cave.

All was dark and silent within for a little while, and then Fingal caught a glimpse of Otto's red beard, as the rascal stuck his head out to spy around.

The keen eyes of the Dane were soon fixed on the prostrate giant, and he then peered through the reeds, listening very intently the while.

"'Tis but a single prowler!" he cried to his brothers, springing out and staring at the fallen giant, "and he is a monster. Out with the torch till we see if we find anything on the rogue worth taking."

The two other Danes were soon out with their brother, and one held a torch to the giant's face, while Otto bent down to examine his pockets, saying:

"What a pity 'tis not a wild boar, and we would have meat for the season."

Uttering a loud roar, like unto that of the wild boar, the giant suddenly seized Otto by the legs, springing to his own feet at the same moment.

Then Fingal swung the rascal around his head as if he had been a club, and knocked the others senseless into the rushes, as he yelled aloud:

"I've caught the foxes, and they are bagged, friends. In and secure them!"

When De Courcey and the two outlaws rushed to the opening of the cave they found Fingal holding Otto aloft over his brothers, and ready to strike them again if they attempted to move.

But there was not a single move in either of the Danish robbers then, and for some time after.

When they did open their eyes again they found that their arms were bound behind them with strong cords, while the giant was standing over them with a grim smile, as he spoke to De Courcey, saying:

"And so the foreign foxes would prey on our Irish pheasants. Drag them along to Athlone, and we'll give them a bright taste of Irish justice—the dogs!"

The three captive Danes were forced out through the rushes, guarded by Fingal and his two friends, while De Courcey followed with the lady of his heart.

When they reached the spot where the horses were secured, the Irish outlaws fastened their prisoners to the animals with long girths, and they were then ordered to run along with the riders.

Fingal then struck Otto, as he cried:

"Get along at full speed, you gallows-bird, and if you attempt any tricks I will flay you alive against each other."

De Courcey rode alone near the giant, and Una was by her lover's side.

"Have our friends crossed yet, think you, good Fingal?" asked the lover.

One glance down at the path, and the giant readily answered:

"They are all ahead of us, and brave Barney will look for us in Athlone very soon. On with you, Turks, or I'll make you bellow out with pain. Who comes here?"

The question was asked aloud, as a party of mountain men dashed out on them from a wood, the leader promptly answering:

"Friends of King James and France. Ha, giant, is it you?"

"St. Ruth, by all that's wicked!" muttered Fingal, pulling up.

The prisoner Otto caught the sound of St. Ruth's name, while he saw the disguised maiden shrinking back with her lover at the same moment, and he cried:

"Brave General St. Ruth, yonder is a disguised maiden, who boasts that she is your enemy. I crave mercy at your hands from those wild Irish savages."

"Silence, you robber dog, or I'll cut your tongue out," cried the giant, as he struck the Dane a rude blow on the mouth.

"A torch here," yelled St. Ruth, as he spurred at the lovers. "On my honor, but 'tis the robber, De Courcey, and the—"

"Back, St. Ruth, on your life," cried the young Irish soldier, drawing his sword, and spurring in front of the maiden. "Back, or I will take the life I saved."

CHAPTER VI.

THE GIANT OUTLAW SPEAKS AND ACTS.

When St. Ruth issued from the wood to intercept De Courcey's party he had about a dozen followers under him.

The other survivors of his band, with the outlaws, were escorting the wounded and the prisoners on the way to Athlone.

By the merest chance in the world the French general had learned that De Courcey and his friends had not proceeded on their journey after crossing the ford, and thus it was that he awaited them in the wood.

Barney of the Bow, on the other hand, being fully assured that his friends were ahead of him on their way to a place of refuge, pushed on to the besieged town with all possible haste, little dreaming that St. Ruth was holding back to intercept the brave youth and his fugitive lady.

When St. Ruth dashed at the lovers with hostile intent, the giant Fingal drew back to De Courcey's side, dragging the Danish prisoner with him.

The two Irish outlaws drew back with their prisoners at the same time, taking positions at each side of their giant leader.

St. Ruth thus found himself confronted by four brave men, each of whom was sworn to protect the young girl from capture, violence or insult of any kind.

De Courcey had already drawn his sword in defiance of St. Ruth, while the giant, raising his huge ax aloft, cried:

"Beware, General St. Ruth, how you interfere with those who travel under the protection of our Irish Robin Hood! 'Tis poor return you make for the services rendered you this very night."

As the valiant Frenchman was chivalrous and generous enough when his passions or prejudices were not aroused, he winced a little under the rebuke, but one glance at the defiant De Courcey roused the evil spirit of self-assertion within him, and he cried, as he motioned to his followers:

"Advance and seize that presumptuous fool who has drawn on me. Sir Giant, out of the way, or we will teach you a lesson in manners to your superiors that may benefit you in the days to come."

"Hold, hold, St. Ruth!" yelled the giant, raising himself in the stirrups and poising the huge ax. "I swear by the mother who bore me that I will cleave you to the very earth on the instant if you advance another step in this outrage. Shame on you, I say! 'Tis you that should take lessons in manners and manhood, to thus assail a youth who fought like a double hero to save your life and honor to-night!"

A murmur of applause arose from St. Ruth's followers on hearing the daring denunciation of the giant outlaw, and their leader turned on them abruptly, as he cried, in fierce, haughty tones:

"What! do you, soldiers of France, thus countenance treason? Am I to be bearded by robbers and—"

"Again and again, St. Ruth," cried De Courcey, "do I hurl the vile word in your teeth. While I do not lead an army of brave men, my blood is as pure and as noble as yours and my name as spotless."

"That is true, by the light of true chivalry," cried the giant.

"You have chosen to believe a vile charge against me, sir," continued De Courcey, "and you denounce me as a robber and an ingrate, without hearing a word in my defense. You are not my chief; and, as a soldier in the cause, I am your equal. As such I demand of you a trial at arms. I appeal to the gallant men under you to show me that courtesy which is but my due."

"Bravely spoken," cried Fingal. "St. Ruth, as you are a valiant man and a gentleman of France, give him the trial."

"And the trial he will have with a vengeance," cried St. Ruth, flinging off his helmet and undoing his breastplate. "I will encounter the Irish thief on equal terms and punish him as he deserves. Assist me to remove the trappings."

Three of the French horsemen sprung from their steeds to obey the order, while the giant clapped his hands in approval, as he cried:

"Hurrah for a fair fight, and my best blessing be with him who strikes for honor and for love. Will it be on horseback or on foot, gentlemen?"

"As that churl desires," cried St. Ruth, drawing his sword.

De Courcey was in the act of whispering to Una at the moment, and he cried:

"We will fight on horseback, as becomes men of rank. The blood of De Courcey is as noble as that of St. Ruth, and no churl ever disgraced my name."

(To be continued.)

FACTS WORTH READING

AN OLD SOLDIER CHARGED WITH SLANDER.

Because he sent a postal card in which he referred to a girl as a "pension thief," Thomas Borland, an inmate of the Soldier's Home, Milwaukee, has been arrested under a federal warrant. Owing to his Civil War record and the fact that he saved President Lincoln from death, United States District Judge Geiger is trying to save him from prison. At an engagement near Washington Private Borland forcibly drew President Lincoln from a parapet where Confederate bullets were flying thick. A moment later two soldiers were killed on the spot where the President had been standing.

OUTWITTED BY BEARS.

The War Department has allowed the soldiers of Troop I, First United States Cavalry, stationed in the Yellowstone National Park, \$10.80 for beef stolen by bears. The department refused at first to allow the claim, but upon receipt of the details of the theft, did so. Col. L. M. Betts explained that his men had taken every precaution to save the meat from the bears, but were outwitted. A screened frame containing the meat was suspended by wires attached to four trees, forming a square. No corner of the frame was within ten feet of any tree. To get meat for meals the cooks used a ladder. One night a bear climbed one of the trees, went out on a limb twelve feet above the meat, dropped on it and bore it to the ground. When morning came meat and bears were gone.

ITALY'S AVALANCHE FENCES.

Italy has just completed a line of fences to protect its railway between Termoli and Campobasso from avalanches of snow. This railway runs through a mountainous district to the east of the Apennines where the snowfall in winter is so heavy and the mountains so steep that avalanches constantly crash down and fill the cuts. The snow-fence is described by the *Engineering News* as being made of reinforced concrete posts spaced 6 feet 7 inches apart and joined by 3-inch pine planks sliding into grooves in the standards. This fence is designed to resist safely a uniform thrust of 20 pounds per square foot or a concentrated horizontal thrust of 660 pounds at the top of each section of fence.

A \$600 DRINK.

The most expensive drink taken by a member of a major league team during the 1913 playing season cost exactly \$600.05. The player who drank the costly beverage is one of the best men in the business, but he has long shown a tendency to topple from the water wagon at times when his services were most needed. Before signing up with his club for last spring, he promised not to take a drink during the season. If he kept his word he was to receive a bonus of \$600 from the owner of the club, who believed that his outfit stood a good chance of being in the pennant fight and, consequently, was willing to offer extra induce-

ments to keep his men in good condition. The player in question kept his good resolution for many weeks, but one day he slipped from the narrow path and, entering a saloon, ordered a glass of beer. While he was drinking it the wise manager of the club strolled in to see what was going on and, taking in the situation at a glance, informed the surprised and dazed player that the nickel's worth of forbidden liquid would cost him the entire bonus plus the price of the drink.

A FLOATING WORKSHOP.

The British Admiralty, says *The Sphere* in its "Naval Notes," has been responsible for a great number of innovations in warship building, and has proved as fertile in original ideas for the improvement of the more humble vessels which generally goes under the name of fleet tenders. This term includes all those colliers, oil carriers, repair and victualing ships, mother ships, and others which are so useful to the main fighting force.

At the present moment the Admiralty is asking the private firms for a price to construct a large floating workshop, which will be stationed at Cromarty. This strange vessel will have three decks, and will in shape be rectangular. It will be 450 feet long and 90 feet wide. The bottom deck will contain the coal bunkers and stores, also boilers and engines for generating the electric power and distilling plant. On the deck above will be found the foundries, machine shops, boiler shops, smithies, engineering and patternmaking departments, and also accommodation for the workmen of all branches. The top deck will have housing room for the staff of 140 to 150 officers and men.

GERMANY HAS A UTOPIA.

Klingenberg, a town in Southern Germany, on the River Main, may lay claim to many of the characteristics of a modern Utopia. It not only supplies every resident with well paid work and relieves him of all his municipal and state taxes, but gives him an annual allowance of \$400 for pin money, with occasional gifts for holiday celebrations.

The fortunes of Klingenberg, which has about 1,700 inhabitants, are founded upon its deposits of clay, which on account of its fire-resisting properties is widely exported, particularly to the United States.

The deposits are worked by the municipality directly at an annual profit of \$100,000, and every Klingenberger is entitled to a position as miner. The fortnightly payday is observed as a holiday, without detriment to the regular German holidays, on which an extra payment of \$1 to \$1.25 is made to every citizen to enable him to celebrate properly.

To prevent the flooding of this ideal place of residence by Germans from all parts of the empire, it has been found necessary to limit rights of citizenship. No one is admitted without a payment of \$425 to the municipal treasury. More favorable terms are granted, however, to men taking wives in the town.

YOUNG TOM BROWN

OR,

THE BOY WHO KNEW HIS BUSINESS

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY.)

CHAPTER XIV (continued).

"It can't be done, my boy. You might pick up a lot of tramps, but they are not mechanics, you couldn't do any thing with them. If you mean to fight, I only see one way."

"I do mean fight. Show me the way, and I'll show you that I know my business," replied Tom.

"Which will be to follow out my idea?"

"Yes. I'm no fool. You are an older hand at the bel-lows than I am. Whatever you say shall be carried out; that's my business now!"

"Then go to St. Louis for your men," said the foreman, who was really a shrewd, farseeing fellow. "The unions out there have pulled away from the unions in this State on account of their arbitrary rules. You can get all the men you want over there, and they know their business, too. They will come prepared to fight for their rights."

"Settled!" said Tom. "I'm off for St. Louise next train."

"What is settled?" asked a sneering voice behind them. "You haven't settled wid me, Tom Brown, and until yez do dere'll be niver a hand's turn done on dis job, and don't you make no mistake."

Tom and Roebuck wheeled around to face Mike Halloran. He was half drunk, in spite of the early hour, and came bustling up to Tom.

"Sure youse did me dirt last night!" he snarled, "and now I'm going to get square. Settled, is it? Take that, you dirty scab!"

Then the walking delegate struck out at Tom and had to learn another lesson.

Tom knew his business in this matter as well as in all others, it seemed.

Jumping nimbly to one side, he let the honorable Mike strike at the air.

The walking delegate lost his balance and went sprawling on his red nose.

With blood on his bloated proboscis, and blood in his eye, he scrambled up and started for Tom, who jumped behind him, caught him by the collar and the broad seat of his trousers.

"Get out of this, you loafer!" he shouted, and then Halloran had a lesson in walking Spanish.

Tom ran him into the street and threw him forward with a force which sent him sprawling in a tub of freshly mixed mortar.

That settled it for the time being.

Breathing vengeance and threatening Tom's arrest, the walking delegate walked away.

"There!" cried Tom. "That will show them that I know my business."

But Jim Roebuck shook his head doubtfully.

"I suppose you couldn't help it, Tom," he said, "but all the same I wish it hadn't happened. I knew that fellow some years ago in Chicago. He's as bad as they make 'em, and he'll get back at you as sure as fate."

"That's all right, Roebuck," Tom replied. "What's done can't be undone. Now I am going to see Mr. Plautz."

CHAPTER XV.

TROUBLE ON THE TRAIN.

"I'm sorry for this, Tom," said the architect. "Of course I cannot doubt that Dr. Merwin will consent to any reasonable delay, but Mr. Jones and the others will not be so lenient. If you can't settle it up with your men they will probably want to break the contract and turn their jobs over to some of these new contractors who have come to town."

"Let them," said Tom. "I shall do my best; no one can do any more. Give me three days, Mr. Plautz, and you will see work going on full swing again."

To this the friendly architect agreed, and Tom spent two of the next three days in St. Louis, to which city he went by the first train.

Arthur Penrose went with him, for company only, for, of course, Arthur knew nothing of such business as that in which Tom was engaged.

Tom went straight to the secretary of the bricklayers' union and told his story.

He was courteously received, and told that a meeting would be called to consider it the next night, at which he was invited to be present and tell his story.

Tom attended the meeting, and without the least show of embarrassment mounted the platform and stated his case.

The matter was then put to vote, and the decision was unanimously in Tom's favor.

After the meeting was over the president of the union called Tom aside and told him that his men had pulled away from the Chicago union on account of just such arbitrary rulings as had been made in this case.

"You pay the union scale, and our men will work as

many hours as you and they agree upon," he further said: "We have been waiting for just such a chance as this. You can rely upon a good gang being ready to start with you for Dimsdale to-morrow night."

This was a great triumph for Young Tom Brown.

His application to the carpenters' union had the same result, for here in St. Louis the two bodies pulled together in perfect harmony.

Tom now wired the result of his mission to his father and Mr. Plautz, and also to Dr. Merwin, whom he had visited before leaving Dimsdale.

When the train left St. Louis that night Tom had his men aboard, and they were good, sturdy fellows, too, prepared to hold their own in any fight.

The train was a local, as the express did not stop at Dimsdale, and Tom and Arthur got what sleep they could on the seats of an ordinary car, for there were no Pullman cars attached to the train.

They were due at Dimsdale at half-past four.

After three o'clock Tom found it impossible to sleep, and as Arthur was in the same fix, and the boys having the car almost to themselves, the workmen being in the car forward, they began to talk.

"Where in the world are you going to put these fellows to live, Tom?" asked Arthur, suddenly. "I don't suppose any of the regular boarding house keepers will dare to take them in."

"Oh, that's all fixed," replied Tom. "I know my business, Arthur. You don't suppose I am such a fool as to forget to look out for that!"

"Well, hardly. I just thought of it, though."

"Oh, I wired Roebuck to hire the opera house. You know the first floor is all right. We can put up cots on the stage. Three hundred men could sleep there."

"And how many have you got?"

"Well, there are a hundred on board with us here, and fifty more coming over to-morrow. That's all I care to handle for the present. I may have to drop one or two of the contracts, but if it is so I shan't shed a tear. I'll have all I can handle even then."

"By Jove, Tom, I wouldn't want to be in your shoes," said Arthur. "I should be expecting every moment to get a bullet in my back."

"Well, this sort of thing is what you have got to stand if you are going to be a successful contractor," replied Tom. "I haven't the least doubt that the strike is a put-up job, a scheme worked by some of the Chicago contractors who have come into Dimsdale. I'll fight 'em, though, Arthur. I'll show them that I know my business, and—heavens and earth! What's that?"

Suddenly the train had stopped on the air-brakes.

Tom and Arthur were thrown forward against the next seat with great force, but neither was hurt at all, and Tom, springing up, made a rush for the door.

"What's the matter?" he demanded of the brakeman, who was hanging off the platform and peering forward.

It was pitch dark and the wind blew almost a gale, for a storm was close at hand.

"Blessed if I know," replied the brakeman. "We are right this side of the half-mile bridge. There may be something the matter with that."

Tom thought of his men

It was a tremendous responsibility for a boy of his years. He knew perfectly well that if it had not been for his father's old established name he never would have been able to hire one of the men who were now under his charge.

"I must go forward and see what it all means, Arthur!" he exclaimed.

Lights were flashing, and men were heard shouting on ahead by the engine.

"You had better look out for yourself. I believe it's a hold-up!" the brakeman said.

"Come on, Arthur!" cried Tom. "We will get into the next car with the men anyhow. In case there is going to be trouble I want to be right on hand."

"I believe it's the work of the blamed old unions," muttered Arthur. "We have been sliding through this business altogether too slick."

Tom jumped down and hurried forward.

As he did so a man jumped off the car ahead, which was occupied by the newly-engaged workmen, and came hurrying toward him.

"Is that you, Boss Brown?" he demanded, as he drew near Tom.

"Yes," replied Tom.

Instantly a revolver cracked and a shot went whizzing past the head of Young Tom Brown.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE TRESTLE.

Lucky for the future of the firm of Brown & Son, the shot missed young Tom Brown.

It could hardly have been otherwise, for the night was very dark.

The man who had so treacherously fired upon Tom, without attempting to shoot again, ducked down, dodged in under the car and crawled across the track, disappearing on the other side.

He was beyond reach before Tom had time to recover himself.

"My! Are you hurt, sir?" cried the brakeman, hurrying forward.

Arthur was ahead of him and had caught Tom in his arms, for he was so frightened that he expected to see his friend drop dead on the spot.

"It's all right! It's all right. I'm not hurt a bit!" cried Tom. "Could that have been one of my men?"

"I'll chase him!" cried Arthur, making a move to crawl under the car, but Tom and the brakeman caught hold of him and pulled him back.

"No, no! Don't think of it," said Tom. "Keep cool, Arthur. It begins to look as though you were right and that this is some of the strikers' work. Let the fellow go.

They hurried forward to the engine.

Many of the workmen came flocking out of the car and joined them.

Everybody was talking about the shot, and they were asking each other who fired it.

Tom told Arthur to keep his mouth shut, and he did so, and refused to answer any questions, although many were put.

(To be continued.)

FROM ALL POINTS

The largest dock east of Suez has been opened at Singapore. It has an entire length of 892½ feet, a width of 100 feet at the entrance, and a depth, over the sill, at high water ordinary spring tides, of 34 feet, with 24 feet at extreme low water. This will, so far as can be seen, at present, anticipate any likely Dreadnought requirements for some time to come. This huge dock can be relieved of its 22,000,000 gallons of water in less than two hours by the pumping power.

Blackberries thrive more luxuriantly in Australia than in Europe or America, their growth being so rapid that in many places they are regarded as an agricultural pest. Like the first rabbits, the original blackberry vines have grown and multiplied until they bid fair to cover the face of the country. The bushes are not cultivated—they can look after themselves, as many Australian agriculturists are painfully aware—but the jam made from their fruit is sufficiently tempting to make one forget their unwelcome presence on the farm.

Rapid progress is being made with the gigantic Apulian aqueduct which will carry the water from the springs of the River Sele in the province of Avellino right through the Apennines to the southern end of Italy, distributing it over a territory of nearly 12,000 square miles, with about 2,500,000 inhabitants. The quantity of water available at the springs is stated to be about 1,200 gallons per second, or over 100,000,000 gallons every twenty-four hours. The cost of the work is estimated at \$25,000,000, says a consular report. The length of the main pipe line will be 125 miles, in addition to which there will be several hundred miles of side lines.

Golden pheasant and several other kinds of pheasants, which are being raised in Atchison, Kan., for commercial purposes by C. O. McCaskill, went down the throat of Keno, a pet wolf, a night or two ago, when the animal broke its moorings at the home of N. D. Merritt, its owner, and went off on a little spree. The wolf, on its way to the pheasant pen, passed chicken pens by the dozen and went straight to the pheasant abode. A heavy wire fence proved to be of little use and the wolf went through with no trouble at all. The next morning it was found that about forty of the birds were missing and Keno was asleep on the ground nearby. The owner of the wolf has agreed to pay for the loss of the fowls.

One million gypsies, with neither home nor country, move across Europe every year from east to west with the beginning of summer. Nowhere are they wanted, everywhere are they eyed askance, but still every year they wander, and the authorities of the countries they cross dread their coming and are relieved when they go. There is always trouble at the frontier. Here the wanderers are

stopped, questioned and often imprisoned as vagrants. But there is nothing to do but finally let them go, and they invariably return the next year. An effort to aid and protect these gypsies, and incidentally the perplexed authorities, is being made by a Swiss clergyman, H. Ecuyer. He has organized a society, one of the purposes of which is to instruct the gypsies in the Christian religion, for these nomads are all pagans. The success of Mr. Ecuyer's efforts, however, is considered very uncertain.

The difficult question of whether it is high treason to turn a bust of the German emperor with its face to the wall has been settled by the sentence of four months' imprisonment passed upon Herr Schatz, of Saargemund, Germany. And yet the luckless Schatz may plead that he had a certain warrant for his rash act. It may be remembered that the people of Alsace have recently been giving some trouble, and the emperor shook his mailed fist at them, metaphorically speaking, and said that Alsace might find itself incorporated with Prussia unless it learned to behave itself. Prussians themselves, by the way, resented the implication that their kingdom was a penal establishment—but that is another story. In sending his paternal admonition to Alsace the emperor concluded with the words that the people "had so far seen only his good side, but they might soon see another." That was enough for the enterprising Schatz. At an ensuing meeting of a French society to which he belongs Schatz quoted these words of the emperor, and then, advancing toward an imperial bust that was on the shelf, he remarked: "We will see the other side at once," and turned it with its face to the wall.

Winter institutes for farmers, at which ten-day courses in all kinds of rural subjects are offered, are becoming a regular feature of educational work in Canada. For several years such an institute has been in operation each winter at Truro, Nova Scotia. Last year the attendance at this place numbered about 400, of whom 100 were from Prince Edward Island and a large number from New Brunswick, these two provinces subsidizing all of their inhabitants who wish to attend. Recently Prince Edward Island has established an institute of its own at Charlottetown. The courses offered here include livestock, poultry, horticulture, soil cultivation, seed selection and dairying; besides women's courses in housekeeping, domestic science, etc. These courses are given free to all inhabitants of the island who care to take advantage of them, and attendance is further encouraged by a bonus of \$5, together with free transportation, to anyone who makes prior application and then completes a course satisfactorily. No examinations are held, the pupils being only required to give intelligent interest throughout the lessons; thus the older farmers, as well as the younger, are encouraged to attend. The courses, which are as practical as possible, are given by experts from all parts of Canada.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

Two pots of gold and a skeleton were recently unearthed in San Francisco by G. W. Tyler, while conducting street-grading operations. The gold, in dust and nuggets, was worth about \$500. The skeleton was believed to be that of some ancient Indian chief, as, in addition to the gold, many valuable trinkets, such as those with which Indians formerly decorated themselves, were found with the bones.

A big horned owl swooping down for a goldfish in the fountain at the east entrance to the White House, became entangled in the water lilies in its basin and was drowned. It was found floating on the water supported by its outstretched wings, which measured four feet. Owls have been heard frequently in the trees on the White House grounds, but attendants said they never had seen one before.

Walter McRay, a diver, lives to tell the tale of a forty-five-minute fight with a devil fish eighty-five feet beneath the surface of the water at Seattle, Wash. McRay every now and then telephoned the progress of the fight. When he finally gave the signal and was hoisted up the tentacles of the dead fish were around him. He had stabbed it eleven times before he was able to strike it in a vital place. The body measured nine feet in circumference.

A dog gave its life recently to save a boy and a girl, children of William Wageman, a farmer living near Red Lake Falls, Minn. A leopard, which had been at large since escaping from a circus at Crookston, attacked the children. Their dog was near by, and it charged the animal, diverting its attention while the little folk ran into the house. After it had killed the dog, the leopard escaped into a cornfield.

Friends of Miss Frances Leighton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. P. Leighton, of Oakland, Cal., have learned that she has abandoned the study of music to work with pick and shovel in male attire in a remote canyon in the Southern Sierras. She is searching for a lost gold mine, and the talisman of her quest is a rude diagram scrawled by the hand of a dying man, her grandfather, John Easton. Easton came to California in 1849 and was fatally injured

while prospecting in Southern California. He told of the discovery of a rich vein and drew a diagram of its location while dying, according to the story that has come down to the present-day Leightons. His daughter, then seven years old, later married C. P. Leighton in Sacramento and the family came to Oakland to live. It was when Mrs. Leighton's daughter, Miss Frances, found the ancient drawing and learned the story of her grandfather's death that she obtained consent from her parents to make a search for the lost mine. She has built a cabin and is making the search alone.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Old Train Robber—You seem to take naturally to this business. What did yer used to do in the city? New Train Robber—I druv a taxi.

“In politics, I presume it is always well to saw wood and say nothing.” “Not always. Sometimes the people send a man to Congress to get rid of his gab.”

Miss D.—I can trace my ancestors back to the Reformation. Miss E.—That's nothing; I can trace mine back years and years before they attempted to reform.

First Mother (reading letter from son at college)—Henry's letters always send me to the dictionary. Second Mother (resignedly)—That's nothing; Jack's always send me to the bank.

Mrs. Culchaw—I suppose in getting together your art collection you secured some paintings by Raphael? Mrs. Newrich—By raffle! Certainly not! We paid full price for everything.

Dr. Post—Did you ever operate on a man who didn't need it simply because he was rich? Dr. Parker—Yes, once—and hang it all, the man up and died, and I thereby lost my wealthiest patient.

Mrs. Ferguson—George, what do you have to do when you want to draw some money out of a bank? Mr. Ferguson—You have to put some money in the bank beforehand. That's always been my experience.

Aunt Mandy is an old colored mammy, with a philosophical turn of mind, but given to many platitudes. Last Christmas day her mistress, an exceeding pious lady, was in a contemplative mood. “Just think, Aunt Mandy,” she said, “1908 years ago to-day the Saviour was born, 1908 years ago.” “My! My!” said Aunt Mandy, “how times do fly!”

“John, you have been our porter for twenty-five years.” “Yes, sir.” “You have been prompt and honest. You have saved the house thousands of dollars.” “I have done my best, sir.” “And we are going to do something for you, John.” “Thank you, sir.” “Yes, John; we are going to let you wear five stripes of gold braid on your sleeve.”

THE GOLDEN CROSS MYSTERY.

By John Sherman.

Many years ago there lived near Manchester, England, a wealthy old gentleman named Julian Vernon. With him resided William Vernon, his brother's son, who was associated with him in business.

The old man, though now on the verge of three-score and ten years, was yet in the habit, as he had been for nearly half a century, of riding into Manchester alone, once a year, to collect his rents. This business usually took two or three days for its transaction.

Being of a miserly disposition, he preferred to do the errand himself rather than pay an agent, however trifling the charge might be.

Will Vernon constantly upbraided the old man with the folly of the thing, but it was of no use to remonstrate. Mr. Vernon could find no reason that was of sufficient importance to prevent him from pursuing the course which he had marked out for himself.

"I can do just as well as an agent," he said. "I've attended to this business for many years, and have not been molested yet."

"That doesn't prove that you may not be, sir," said Will. "The soundest pitcher is broken at last."

"Tut, tut!" testily exclaimed Mr. Vernon. "Youngsters are too wise nowadays. Don't try to dictate to your elders, boy. I can take care of myself, never fear."

Such were his parting words on the occasion of his last visit to Manchester. On this day his nephew felt more than usually anxious, and after fretting away two days of his uncle's absence, determined to take the road in the direction of town and meet him on his return. The old man always made his headquarters at the "Golden Cross"; he would transact his business in the daytime and return at night to the inn. The fourth day he usually started to return home, and his nephew knew that on the evening of the third, if nothing should happen, he would meet him there.

The young man had prepared every detail requisite for the journey, when by a fortunate combination of circumstances, I found myself in the outskirts of Manchester, where I had been sent by my superiors to look up a little affair that had caused a considerable amount of annoyance to the aristocracy in that neighborhood, and on the day in question, as I was driving by the home of the Vernons, I was hailed by Will, whose father I had served in a matter when Will was quite young and whom, consequently, I knew quite well.

He explained to me the condition of affairs. I accordingly started and arrived at the inn safely just as night was coming on. On entering I observed two rough-looking men seated at a side table. I thought them rather hard-looking specimens, but said nothing.

My first thought was to make inquiries of the innkeeper respecting Will's uncle.

"He left the inn early this morning," said the landlord, who knew me, "saying that he had much business to transact during the day, but should be back shortly after sunset.

He will be here soon, I think. But he is much too old to ride around the country in this fashion. It is not safe."

"I know that, but it's of no use to reason with him. I felt uneasy about him—that is why I am here to-night."

"Does he usually collect a large amount of money?"

"Yes; too much for an old man to have about him."

The two men at the table here exchanged glances.

"Well, he is very foolish; that is all I can say," said the landlord. "I suppose he will return through Ashdene road; that's as safe as any in these parts, I think."

The two men arose at this point of the conversation, and after settling their score, quietly withdrew from the inn.

"Do you know those fellows?" I asked my host.

"No; they are strangers hereabouts," Boniface returned.

"Rough-looking customers—one of them especially."

"Yes, I noticed that."

"Presently he exclaimed:

"I feel strangely anxious about Mr. Vernon, Wilson. If he does not return within the hour, I shall ride out in search of him."

"Wait till the moon rises," Wilson replied. "It's so dark you can't see your hand before your face."

Suddenly there came from without the sound of hoofs.

"That must be the old gentleman," exclaimed Wilson.

"But I never knew him to ride so before. He must be alarmed at something. He is coming at a fearful pace."

The clatter of hoofs now grew louder and more distinct. I waited anxiously. In a moment the horse was visible. It was riderless!

Mr. Vernon had been murdered and robbed!

Great was the sensation caused by the mysterious murder of the old gentleman. He had disappeared from the face of the earth so suddenly that not the slightest clew was left to point to the manner of his taking off. The two men that I had seen in the Golden Cross had vanished.

Diligent search and tireless inquiry failed to bring to light any facts that would tend to throw the least light on the mysterious murder.

Ten years passed, and the tragedy was well-nigh forgotten. During that lapse of time, however, I had made it a point to stop at the "Golden Cross," whenever I should find myself in that part of the country, and many a time was the topic of the Vernon murder discussed and speculated upon by the good host and myself far into the night.

On the occasion of which I am about to write, I had just arrived at the inn on a usual visit. The landlord gave me a cordial greeting.

"I've been thinking about you all day, Mr.—," he said. "It is just ten years ago to-night since poor old Mr. Vernon was murdered."

"Yes," I replied, "I remember it well, and I shall never rest till his murderers are brought to punishment."

As we talked in this strain, we observed a middle-aged man approaching from an opposite direction. He accosted the inn-keeper and desired to know if he could be accommodated with a room.

"Certainly, sir," said mine host. "Here, Boots, show this party to a room."

With a nod the man shuffled away. I had been regarding him intently and felt sure that I had seen his face be-

fore, but where I could not at first remember. Suddenly came light, and my whole frame trembled.

"What's the matter, sir?" asked Wilson. "Are you ill?"

"Oh, no," I answered. "But I have an odd request to make. Can you arrange it so that I can have the room next to this stranger?"

"It is rather a strange fancy," replied the landlord, curiously, "but I think I can accommodate you."

"Thank you. Do not mention to any one what I have said. I have reasons for secrecy."

At an early hour I went to my chamber. I lay on the outside of the bed and listened intently for the faintest sound in the adjoining apartment.

It was getting on toward midnight when I heard a movement in the stranger's room.

I arose softly and listened with suspended breath. In a moment I heard a latch lifted, and then a door was cautiously opened; a man crept along the passage, stealthily descended the stairs, opened the outside door and passed out.

The instant the door was closed I sprang to a window which overlooked the yard.

In a moment the man had passed by the corner of the house and was fully revealed by the light from the moon. He looked anxiously toward the house, then walked to one of the outbuildings, soon reappearing with a spade over his shoulder and walked in the direction of the Ashdene road.

I crept downstairs, carrying my boots, which I speedily drew on in the open air. I then started off in pursuit of the stranger, keeping as much in the shadow as possible.

Occasionally the man paused and looked around; then he moved stealthily on again.

Suddenly the man turned to the left and paused beside a clump of bushes.

First he examined the ground carefully and peered down as if in search of some coveted prize.

"Ah, I have it!" said he, aloud. "This is the very spot."

The next moment he had driven the spade in the ground. He threw up a few shovelfuls of earth, his attitude one of extreme nervousness, after which he stooped, picked up something and held it toward the moonlight.

It was a small box, and I knew by the dull, clicking sound that it contained money. Feeling satisfied upon that point, I hurried back to the inn, where I arrived fifteen minutes before the stranger.

I watched the fellow on his return, saw him replace the spade in the shed, heard him ascend the stairs and enter his room. Soon all was silent. I listened awhile longer, then, feeling satisfied that the man was asleep, groped my way to the landlord's room and requested him to get up immediately.

In a few moments Wilson appeared, rubbing his eyes.

"Hush!" cried I, as he was about to speak. "Be cautious! As I stand before you a living man, I have found old Mr. Vernon's murderer to-night."

"Who—who is it?" he at last managed to stammer out.

"Why, the stranger," replied I.

Ten minutes after I was on the road. My first care was to procure a warrant for the stranger's arrest, and then, in company with two of the police, I started back to the Golden Cross inn.

It was daylight when we drove into the yard, and the stranger was just coming down the steps.

On a signal from me he was taken at once into custody and conveyed to prison, where he underwent an examination before the magistrate, who committed him for trial at the next assizes. During the time between the examination and trial Martin Blake, for such was the stranger's name, continued indifferent to all persuasions to confess his crime.

The testimony of the innkeeper and post-boy tended in no way to cause him alarm, but when I was called and stated, as is customary with members of our profession, in a calm, clear voice, that I had recognized the prisoner on the night of his arrival at the "Golden Cross" as one of the men I had seen at the inn on the very night Julian Vernon was murdered, he began to show some signs of alarm, and when I stated further that I had watched his movements and afterward followed him to the place where the box was concealed, Blake's guilt and terror became so manifest as to convince people of his guilt.

Suffice it to say that the jury, after a brief declaration, returned a verdict of guilty, and Blake was sentenced to be hanged on the very spot where he had buried a small portion of the stolen money, the attempted recovery of which had caused his arrest and conviction.

It may surprise a good many to learn that no fewer than twenty-two separate processes are required to make the tiny steel needle familiar to every one, but the fact gives one an idea of the perfection to which its manufacture has been brought. A needle is shown of the time of Queen Victoria's accession in the factory, and a comparison of the one made to-day shows what strides the industry has made, even in one reign, and what patience and inventiveness have been brought to bear upon it. A thick, badly-shaped shaft, white in color, with an irregular point, a head much larger than the body of the object, and a roughly-drilled circular eye; such was the needle with which the seamstress of 1837 had to sew. The modern needle is fine, with an evenly-tapered point, a head no wider than the shaft, an eye perfectly smooth inside and well shaped, and a polish like glass, so that it slips easily through the material sewn. To understand to what a pitch of perfection needle making has been brought, one has only to examine the "calyx-eyed" needle, one of the latest developments of the article. As it is threaded through a slit in the top of the head instead of in the ordinary way, there must be sufficient elasticity to allow the thread to pass into the eye without being frayed or cut, and at the same time the sides of the head must be capable of springing together again so as to prevent the cotton from slipping out after the needle is threaded. It is evident that to ensure elasticity the needle must be tempered with the greatest regularity; and extreme care has to be taken to make the sides of the slit perfectly smooth, so that the thread will not be cut while passing through it.

GOOD READING

Strange as it may seem, it is possible to light your cigar by means of ice. Take a piece of clear ice, about one inch thick, cut it into the shape of a disc, and with the palms of the hands melt its two sides convex, giving it the form of a double convex lens or burning-glass. Now, if the sun will only condescend to shine, focus its rays on the end of your cigar, and the feat is done.

The trial began at Berlin October 23 of one of the directors and a former agent of the Krupp armament works, who are charged with bribing government officials to betray official secrets. The accused are respectively Otto Ecclus and Maximilian Brandt. The proceedings were uninteresting except for the disclosure by Brandt of his original instructions from the Krupp works to approach his former comrades in the German army and to entertain them at Krupp's expense, in order to obtain in advance information as to contracts about to be given out by the German government.

Rear Admiral Peary has presented one of his North Pole sledges to the Deutsches Museum, Munich, according to announcement made last night. In making the gift the explorer kept a promise made some time ago to the German commission that came to this country to study museums. The sledge arrived here on Thursday from the Peary summer home in Maine and was placed on the Hamburg-American liner Amerika, now on its way across to Europe. It will be delivered to Professor Dr. Oskar von Miller, of the Deutsches Museum.

A gift of approximately \$4,000,000 to the Cornell University Medical College was announced to-day on behalf of the board of trustees. It is understood that the gift, the largest in the history of the university, was presented by Colonel Oliver H. Payne, of New York, who prior to that gave a large sum for the establishment of the branch of the Cornell Medical College in New York City. The interest from the gift will give the medical college an annual income of \$200,000. Although interested in Cornell, Colonel Payne was a Yale man, having been graduated from the New Haven institution with the class of '63. He is an honorary member of the Cornell University Association.

A monster sea lion that invaded the town of Newport, Ore., was slain with an ax recently after a decidedly strenuous day. Sea lions are not popular, because they prey on salmon, and this one was blinded by shot from a fisherman's gun. Perhaps it began angry and determined to get even; anyway, it headed for Newport. While swimming across Yaquina Bay it collided with the steamer Newport, exciting the 250 passengers on the boat. It finally reached the shore and climbed onto the board walk leading to Front street, where it ripped up several planks and frightened scores of people. Jack Briggs, of the life-saving station, killed the visitor, which weighed 650 pounds.

Ray Munker, sixteen years old, went swimming in Winwood Lake, Kansas City, Mo., with several other boys. They had been in the water only a short time when Munker suddenly began struggling and shouted, "Help!" Then he sank. His companions swam to the place where he had gone down and dived and splashed and lashed the water into foam in a frantic effort to find him. Then they saw him come up a few feet away and swim away easily, laughing. It was great sport. Again and again he tried it, until finally his cries for help went unheeded. When he shouted the last time the boys scarcely looked at the place where he had sunk from sight. And when they did miss him they had forgotten the spot where they last saw him. Thirty minutes later they found his body at the bottom of the lake. Efforts to restore life to the boy were futile.

More than one-fifth of the men who served in the army and navy of the United States during the Civil War were still on the Government's pension roll at the beginning of the present fiscal year. This was shown by the annual report of Commissioner of Pensions Saltzgaber, made public on October 22, in which it appears that on July 1 last there were 462,379 Civil War pensioners. In the last year there was a decrease of 34,884 such pensioners, while the net loss in the entire pension roll was 40,094, leaving 820,200 pensioners of all classes. There remain 1,142 Mexican War pensioners and 1,066 from Indian wars. The last surviving pensioner of the War of 1812 died eight years ago, although 199 widows of that war's fighters still receive pensions, a decrease of thirty-nine since last year. Ohio leads the states with the largest number of pensioners, 77,599, followed by Pennsylvania, with 75,610; New York, 68,270; Illinois, 56,482; Indiana, 49,987; Missouri, 29,490; Michigan, 34,298, and Massachusetts, 34,124.

The fury of militarism which has spread over Europe has had a ridiculous result in the decision of the little republic of San Marino, about 100 miles southwest of Venice on the Adriatic coast, with a population of 10,655 to increase its armament. Up to the present the military power of the republic has consisted of one truck field gun, brought in 1893, and under its protection the country has existed in perfect tranquillity and freedom among aggression, but to meet the demands of the new military situation in Europe San Marino has now invested in a whole battery of four field guns. As the Balkan War has demonstrated the manifest superiority of the French guns, San Marino has placed its order with the Creusot firm. At the same time that the armament is increased the military force is being raised from nine to thirty men. A difficult international question has arisen, however, in connection with this offensive and defensive increase. The new guns have a range of nine miles across, hence it will be impossible to practise with the guns without the shells falling into Italian territory, and it is feared that this may cause diplomatic complications.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

CHEAP ASPHALT PAVING.

There is coming into use in Germany a cheap and ready method of asphaltting a stone-paved street which is showing good results. The spaces between paving blocks are cleaned out to the depth of about an inch, and then a layer of melted asphalt is flowed over the street surface, the depth of the layer being about one inch. Before it is cooled, sand is sprinkled on and the surface is smoothed. At Frankfort a section of this kind is now laid, and it appears to stand the wear remarkably well. Should the method prove a success in general practice, it will afford an excellent means for deadening the noise of city traffic at a small expense. It is quickly carried out, and it need not stop the circulation on narrow streets for any length of time. Moreover, repairs are easily made.

BUBONIC PLAGUE RATS.

Dr. James E. Crichton, the local health officer, said recently that there were many bubonic plague rats in Seattle and that the situation was serious, but that the Health Department hoped to prevent an outbreak of the disease. "Not for six years," he said, "has there been a base of bubonic plague in a human being in Seattle. In those six years we have found twenty-four plague rats. A considerable number were taken during the plague outbreak six years ago, and recently seven were killed in a section of the water front which has been thoroughly isolated. Thousands of dollars are being expended under the orders of the Health Department in tearing down condemned wooden buildings, constructing cement basements, and otherwise making the water front ratproof. The infected district is two blocks long and one block wide and fronts on the bay. We are trying to make it impossible for rats to lodge or breed on the water front."

ARCHERY GETTING POPULAR.

At the annual archery meeting, at Le Touquet, France, the record flight of 459 yards has aroused great interest. It is not widely known that there is an excellent body of archers in London. Very few would suspect the presence of the delightful Old World sport, an arrow's flight from the rear of Marylebone Road. It is here archery flourishes in a modest way under the auspices of the Royal Toxophilite Society. Hither more than one member of the House of Commons may be seen wending his way. Here are bows and arrows taken from the tombs of Egyptian kings, dating back to B.C. 2600. In a glass case is a small Turkish bow, an arrow from which made a marvelous flight. The French flight of 459 yards 8 inches has been erroneously described as a record since 1794. The marvelous little Turkish bow of Regent's Park also has a record. During 1795 Mahmoud Effendi, a member of the Turkish legation, with his bow in Regent's Park shot an arrow 480 yards, as measured by three members of the Royal Toxophilite Society. Probably the longest distance flights of recent years were those set up at Le Touquet by Sir Ralph

Payne Gallway, Bart., in 1905. In private the distances covered were 420, 415 and 412 yards. At the meeting his distance was measured at 367 yards. Far from languishing, the sport of kings and outlaws is making satisfactory progress in this country, which possesses nearly eighty societies. Archery, like other patrician sport, does not court publicity, and probably this accounts for the idea that the sport is dying out.

CAUGHT IN DYNAMITE GUARDED CABIN.

After eluding Government officers all summer, David Hall, of Pike County, Ky., is now under arrest, following an unexpected visit paid to him in his dynamite guarded cabin near Bluehead Notch, in the Cumberland Mountains. With his arrest all the "moonshiners" accused of the assassination of two revenue officers and the desperate wounding of a third are in custody.

The capture of Hall came after a chase which rivals the exploit in Oregon of "Tracy, the Outlaw," a few years ago. Hall, however, did not perform his deeds on so public a stage as did Tracy, so the world outside was not aware of the dramatic events that were happening back in the Cumberland Mountains.

United States Deputy William Fields succeeded in capturing Hall. Ever since the battle of last May, when Hall and his companions killed two of Field's comrades, Fields had been bent on capturing the outlaw, and at last located him in the Bluehead Notch country. Hall had friends scattered through the country, and he became aware that Fields was after him. For weeks he and Fields played a game of hide and seek through the mountains.

At last Fields discovered a cabin hidden in a recess so remote as almost to avoid detection, which Hall was using as his hiding place. He also discovered that Hall, who possessed great ingenuity and considerable mechanical skill, had fortified his place in a most remarkable manner. He had procured dynamite which he had planted in mines around his retreat. By an ingenious contrivance he had arranged electric wires running from inside the cabin to these mines by means of which they could be exploded from within by a battery.

If Fields had not discovered the secret of these mines he and his deputies might have been blown up when they essayed to capture the mountaineer. Just before dawn Fields and three men surrounded the cabin. Fields crept forward and cut the wires. He then called on Hall to surrender, threatening to burn the cabin and kill the outlaw if he refused.

Hall says he tried to explode his mines, but when he found the wires had been cut it was useless. He surrendered meekly enough, and the chase of months through the mountains was ended. The capture of Dave Hall was the second thrilling chapter in this story of the Cumberland Mountains. The first came last May. The whole story arose from a young girl's effort to make her brothers leave their devious ways of lawlessness.

DELUSION TRICK.



A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.



Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch.

It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

COMICAL RUBBER STAMPS.



A complete set of five grotesque little people made of indestructible rubber mounted on black walnut blocks. The figures consist of Policeman, Chinaman, and other laughable figures as shown in pictures. As each figure is mounted on a separate block, any boy can set up a regular parade or circus by printing the figures in different positions.

With each set of figures we send a bottle of colored ink, an ink pad and full instructions. Children can stamp these pictures on their toys, picture books, writing paper and envelopes, and they are without doubt the most amusing and entertaining novelty gotten up in years. Price of the complete set of Rubber Stamps, with ink and ink pad, only 10c., 3 sets for 25c., one dozen 90c., by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

JUMPING TELESCOPE.

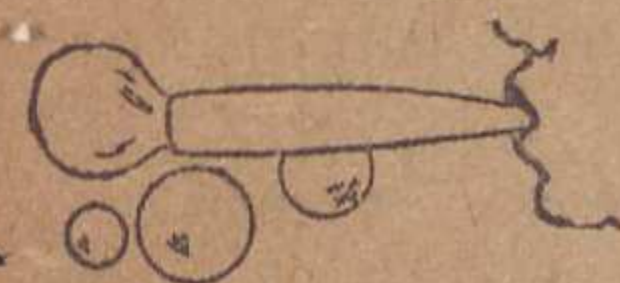


This is an oblong tube in exact imitation of a telescope. By looking through it, reveals one highly magnified picture of a dancer or other subject. It contains on the side a button, which the victim is told to press for a change of picture. Instead of another picture appearing, the entire inside part shoots out, as shown in illustration. It is entirely harmless, but gives the victim a genuine scare.

Price, 15c. each; 2 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

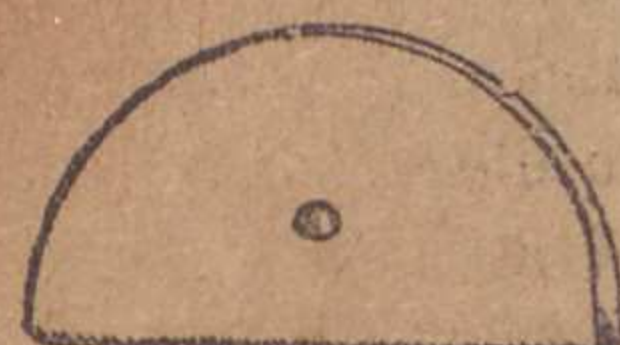
BUBBLE BLOWER.



With this device, a continuous series of bubbles can be blown. It is a wooden, cigar-shaped blower, encasing a small vial, in which there is a piece of soap. The vial is filled with water, and a peculiarly perforated cork is inserted. When you blow in to the mouthpiece, it sets up a hydraulic pressure through the cork perforations and causes bubble after bubble to come out. No need of dipping into water once the little bottle is filled. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

WHISTLEPHONE



This is one of the greatest musical instruments ever invented. It is made entirely of metal and is almost invisible when in use. With it, in a few moments, you can learn to play all kinds of tunes, have lots of fun, please and amuse your friends and make some money, too. Fine for either song or piano accompaniment or by itself alone. You place the whistlephone in the mouth with half circle out, place end of tongue to rounded part and blow gently as if to cool the lips. A few trials will enable one to play any tune or air.

Price 6 cents each by mail, post-paid

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

**Sure Fire
Accuracy
Penetration**

**The World's
Record Holders**

**Remington-UMC .22 cal.
cartridges have broken
two records in two years.**

The present world's 100-shot gallery record, 2484 ex 2500, held by Arthur Hubalek was made with these hard hitting .22's.

They will help you, too, to break your best shooting records.

Remington-UMC .22's are made, too, with hollow point bullets. This increases their shocking and killing power.

Remington-UMC—the perfect shooting combination

REMINGTON ARMS-UNION METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO. 299 Broadway, New York City



JUMPING CARD.—A pretty little trick, easy to perform. Effect: A selected card returned to the deck jumps high into the air at the performer's command. Pack is held in one hand. Price of apparatus, with enough cards to perform the trick, 10c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK FAN.



A lady's fan made of colored silk cloth. The fan may be used and then shut, and when it opens again, it falls in pieces; shut and open again and it is perfect, without a sign of a break. A great surprise for those not in the trick. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid.

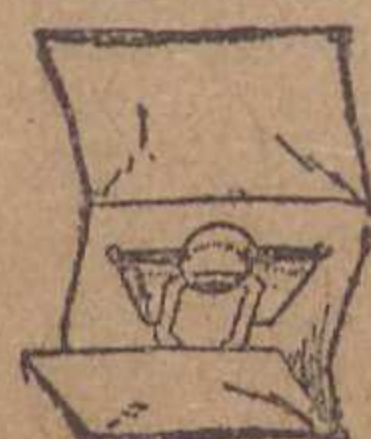
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.



The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nicked tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer. Price 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



SURPRISE LETTER DRUM.

Stung! That was one on you! The joke? You send a friend a letter. He opens it, and that releases the drum. Instantly the sheet of note paper begins to bang and thump furiously, with a ripping, tearing sound. Guaranteed to make a man with iron nerves almost jump out of his skin. You can catch the sharpest wisenheimer with this one. Don't miss getting a few. Price, 6c. each by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

GREENBACKS! Big bunch of stage money, 10c. The Literary Enterprise - 3348 Lowe Ave., Chicago.



VOICE THROWER 10c

Wonderful instrument that creates a new vocal power. Sounds appear to come from a great distance away. Held unseen in the mouth. Mystifies everybody. Send a dime for yours today. Our great catalog of Magic and Mystery included free. McKINLEY CO., D^{rs} WINONA, MINN.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME



Ventriloquist Double Throat

Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary, and imitate birds and beasts of the field and forest. Loads of fun. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price: only 10 cents; 4 for 25 cents, or 12 for 50 cents.

Double Throat Co. Dpt. K Frenchtown, N.J.

OLD COINS WANTED. \$1 to \$600 paid for hundreds of coins dated before 1834. Send 10 cents for our coin value book, it may mean your fortune. ROCKWELL & CO. 3295 Archer Ave., CHICAGO, ILL.

MAGIC PACK CARDS & big Catalog by mail. 5c. Bates Magic Co., 5 Melrose, Mass.

RUBBER TACKS.



They come six in a box. A wonderful imitation of the real tack. Made of rubber. The box in which they come is the ordinary tack box. This is a great parlor entertainer and you can play a lot of tricks with the tacks. Place them in the palm of your hand, point upward. Then slap the other hand over the tacks and it will seem as if you are committing suicide. Or you can show the tacks and then put them in your mouth and chew them, making believe you have swallowed them. Your friends will think you are a magician. Then, again, you can exhibit the tacks and then quickly push one in your cheek or somebody else's cheek and they will shriek with fear. Absolutely harmless and a very practical and funny joke. Price by mail, 10c. a box of 6 tacks; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE GREAT FIRE EATER.



A great Sensational Trick of the Day! With the Fire Eater in his possession any person can become a perfect salamander, apparently breathing fire and ejecting thousands of brilliant sparks from his mouth, to the horror and consternation of all beholders. Harmless fun for all times, seasons and places. If you wish to produce a decided sensation in your neighborhood don't fail to procure one. We send the Fire Eater with all the materials, in a handsome box, the cover of which is highly ornamented with illustrations in various colors. Price of all complete only 15c., or 4 boxes for 50c., mailed postpaid; one dozen by express \$1.20.

N. B.—Full printed instructions for performing the trick accompany each box, which also contains sufficient material for giving several exhibitions.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

Look! A GRAND PREMIUM Look!

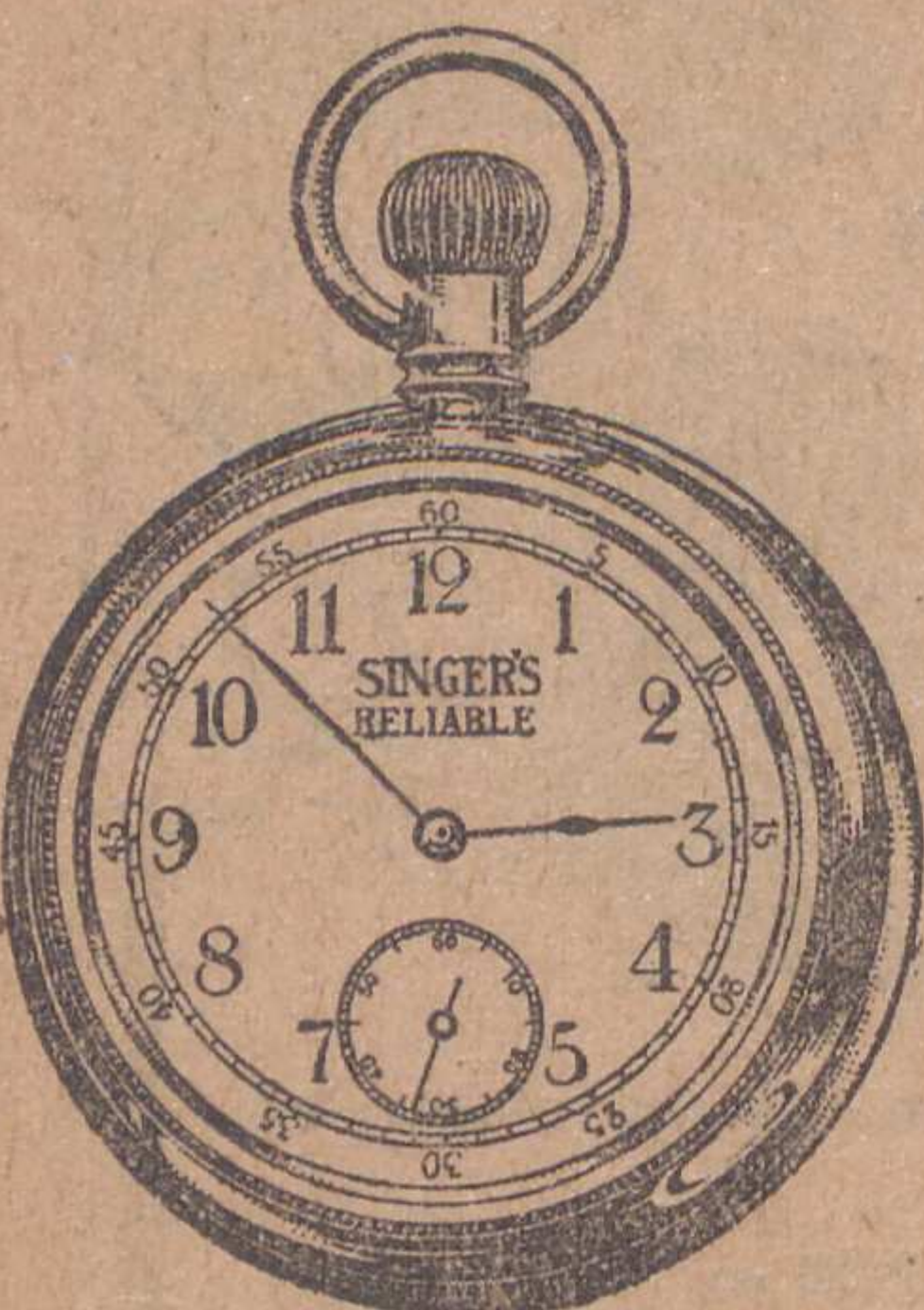
One of these fine watches **FREE** to anyone sending us

One—1 year's subscription at . . . \$2.50
Two—6 months' subscriptions at . . . 1.25 each
Four—3 months' subscriptions at . . . 0.65 each

For either of the following: "Moving Picture Stories," "Happy Days," "Wild West Weekly," "Fame and Fortune Weekly," "The Liberty Boys of '76," "Secret Service," "Work and Win," or "Pluck and Luck."

There is only one condition—send us the money and we will send you the watch, and any one of the above publications for the period subscribed for.

Description of the Watch



Face



Back

It is American-made, open face, stem wind and set, and will run from 30 to 36 hours with one winding. The movement is the same size as an expensive railroad timepiece, absolutely accurate, and each one is guaranteed. The cases are made in Gold Plate, Polished Nickel, Gun-metal with Gilt center and plain Gun-metal.

The design on the back case is a fancy engraved scroll.

Send in Your Subscriptions Now to

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 168 West 23d St., N. Y. City

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE PEG JUMPER.



A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. A wooden peg is inside of the upper hole. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown. Price by mail, 15c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE JUMPING FROG.



This little novelty creates a world of laughter. Its chief attractiveness is that it takes a few seconds before leaping high in the air, so that when set, very innocently along side of an unsuspecting person, he is suddenly startled by the wonderful activity of this frog. Price, 15c. each by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

MANY TOOL KEY RING.



The wonder of the age. The greatest small tool in the world. In this little instrument you have in combination seven useful tools embracing Key Ring, Pencil Sharpener, Nail Cutter and Cleaner, Watch Opener, Cigar Clipper, Letter Opener and Screw Driver. It is not a toy, but a useful article, made of cutlery steel, tempered and highly nickeled. Therefore will carry an edge the same as any piece of cutlery. As a useful tool, nothing has ever been offered to the public to equal it. Price, 15c., mailed, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.



If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver, trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 7c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE FLUTOPHONE.



A new musical instrument, producing the sweetest dulcet tones of the flute. The upper part of the instrument is placed in the mouth, the lips covering the openings in the centre. Then by blowing gently upon it you can play any tune desired as easily as whistling. But little practice is required to become a finished player. It is made entirely of metal, and will last a lifetime. We will send full instructions with each instrument.

Price 8 cents, by mail, postpaid.
A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

SPRING TOPS



Something new for the boys. A top you can spin without a string. This is a decided novelty. It is of large size, made of brass, and has a heavy balance rim. The shank contains a powerful spring and has an outer casing. The top of the shank has a milled edge for winding it up. When wound, you merely lift the outer casing, and the top spins at such a rapid speed that the balance rim keeps it going a long time. Without doubt the handsomest and best top on the market.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

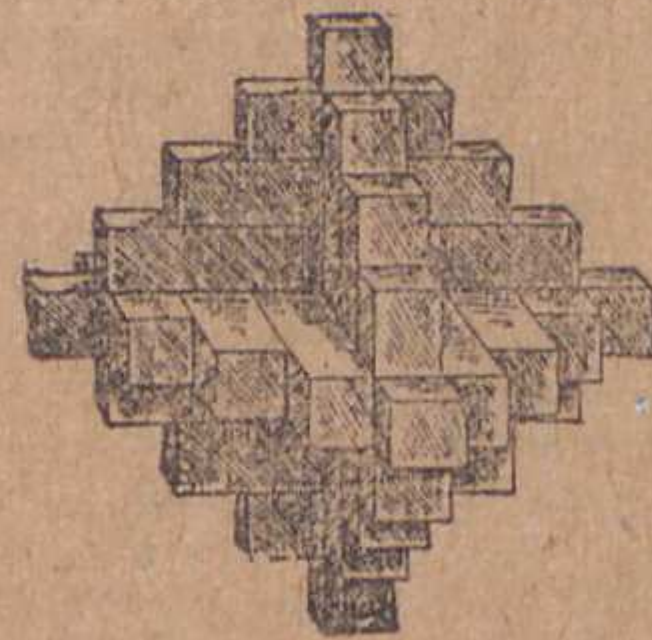
VANISHING CIGAR.



This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

GIANT SAW PUZZLE.



This puzzle contains twenty-one pieces of wood nicely finished; take them apart and put them together same as illustrated. Everybody would like to try it, as it is very fascinating. Price, by mail, postpaid, 25c. each.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE FIGHTING ROOSTERS.



A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These lilliputian fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs, for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE ELK HEAD PUZZLE.



Just out, and one of the most fascinating puzzles on the market. The stunt is to separate the antlers and rejoin them. It looks easy, but try it and you will admit that it is without exception the best puzzle you have ever seen. You can't leave it alone. Made of silvered metal. Price, 12c.; 3 for 30c., sent by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.